FATHER AS HE SHOULD BE.



A NOVEL.

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A

Father as he should be.

A Novel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MRS. HOFLAND,

AUTHOR OF

SAYS SHE TO HER NEIGHBOUR, CLERGYMAN'S WIDOW, VISIT TO LONDON, PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE, &c. &c.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must be not only equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both Friendship composed of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other. Marriage is the most perfect union of friendship. *Rambler*

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A FATHER AS HE SHOULD BE.



CHAP. I.

AT length, the important day arrived which was to introduce Louisa to that gay world nature and fortune had alike enabled her to ornament rather than enjoy; but as she was of an age to relish pleasure, and possessed that superior taste and fine perception, which give every species of amusement its highest zest, she naturally looked forward to much entertainment on this evening, though her heart was neither throbbing for the pleasures of conquest, nor aching for the more substantial comfort promised by an eligible establishment.

A few months before, Louisa would have

highly delighted in the gay scene around her; and with Henry by her side, to whom she ever most freely communicated her thoughts, would have believed that she was perfectly happy; but she was now sensible that one was wanting whose loss even Henry could not have supplied—one on whom her heart sought to hold a communion dearer than words—the single glance of whose approving eye would have been infinitely more dear than the loudest buzz of admiration, or the softest whisper of flattery that now surrounded her.

Louisa had now completed her eighteenth year; she was just so far above the middle size as to add grace and dignity to the most perfect delicacy and finished elegance, of which the female form is capable; her complexion was fair to transparency, her mouth exquisitely formed, her eyes, the most perfect blue, possessed not only the softness usually attributed to that colour, but a brilliancy and playfulness rarely met with; and there were times when they

cast such a lambent flame, as they darted under the long silken eyelashes which at once veiled and improved them, that not only her own features were lighted up with new animation, but the spectator felt as if the vivid lustre was communicable, and that all around her glowed with the electric spark of beauty: yet perhaps the most peculiar charm of Louisa lay in her dimples; when she smiled, there was fascination in every feature; such an expression of countenance would alone have been beauty, had she possessed neither features nor complexion; for it would have engaged every eye, and made every heart her friend.

In her face, Louisa greatly resembled her father and lady Salthorpe; her figure was precisely that of her mother, who was one of the finest women present even now, and doubtless felt a mother's pride in observing her lovely daughter "blushing at the deep regard she drew;" but she too sighed for her absent son. Nor was poor

sir Francis satisfied; his eye wished it could have rested on his beloved Edward Sefton, whom, with better hopes than the ladies of his family, he had really expected to see.

As, however, the baronet could not see Edward, he looked at other things; he perceived that a superior taste was discernible in his sister's rooms, which were elegant and even magnificent, without being extravagant, or exhibiting any of that childish desire of celebrity, from the power of throwing away money, which so frequently characterizes similar entertainments. He perceived not only the gay and the fashionable, but the literary and the meritorious of every profession; and although he could not always admire those who are met with in such parties, as being the peculiarly *talented,* the professed performers of the evening, yet he liked the idea of distinguishing merit, which he apprehended had introduced them; and he was much pleased with the variety of characters assembled round him, and flattered by the admiration, universally excited by

Louisa, who was, wherever she moved, the centre of attraction, through many lovely young women were in the rooms.

Sir Francis was so old-fashioned, that he could not help hovering near his own wife; and whenever he heard or saw any thing that pleased him, it was instantly communicated to her, as the one person who, in all this vast company, had really the power to feel with his feelings and think with his thoughts. But Louisa was, to-night, the property of lady Selthorpe, who hung on her arm all the time she was receiving her friends and arranging her sets: it was no wonder so much beauty in one, so much vivacity in the other, should be magnetic. The viscountess, happy herself, communicated happiness to others; welcome was on her lip, and joy in her eye.

Louisa was astonished at the variety and felicity of her address, the grace and rapidity of her utterance, and the evident pleasure she diffused on all around her; she had been wont to consider her mother as the happiest woman in the world; but

she thought she perceived now, that the life of a woman of fashion did really excel that of a country gentlewoman as much in pleasure as it affected to do; her own spirits rose with the scene around her; and on tripping away, to open the ball with the earl of Delapoole, the most elegant young nobleman in the kingdom, she obtained sufficient courage from exhilaration, to appear to the greatest advantage.

During the dances, lady Selthorpe had been arranging card-tables; she was a good deal fatigued, but her face was lighted up by a new smile, as Louisa approaching her, said—"My dear madam, how much I am obliged to you! I have had an excellent partner—a charming dance. What a number of happy faces have you made!"

"True, my dear; happy *faces* are in abundance."

"Happy people wear them, I hope, my dear aunty."

"Doubtless, my dear; for there are in the room several who are young and undesigning, simple, sensitive, and lively;

these are happy, for every thing around them inspires hilarity; the rest are happy by habit, happy in expectation, or happy by profession; so, as you say, they are *all* happy."

"I love to hear *you* moralize; do pray distinguish them."

"The happy by *habit*, are principally married ladies, who are easy in their fortunes, fond of show, and not overfond of their families; they like to visit scenes of this kind, because it kills time, shews fine clothes, and gives hints for their own adoption or rejection: but here comes your negus and your partner—away with him. What an elegant man he is!"

Louisa did not, however, lose sight of the discourse, for though her partner was indeed elegant, and the dance charming, yet it did not act like a spell on her; 'twas not like an Highland reel on the turf, at dear Patrick Steuart's, and the consciousness of this increased upon her; she therefore sought less to gain information than to lose memory, when she again pressed

to lady Selthorpe, saying—" Pray who are the happy in *expectation?*"

"The whole race of card-players, child, to which you may add all angling mothers, who have got a bite, and all daughters, God help 'em, who are nibbling themselves; love is a very sweet flower in the *bud,* my dear."

Louisa blushed excessively; it was with difficulty, and as a pure effort to prevent her confusion being seen, that she cried out—" But who are the happy by *profession?*"

"Ruined gamesters, disappointed parents, wretched wives, all those whom misery has just left with sufficient mind and spirit enough to resent the busy interference of the world, which loves to throw their folly in their faces; these are the happy by profession; and they are to a certain degree happy in fact, when they believe they have cheated their audience."

"Poor things!" said Louisa with a sigh.

"Reserve your pity; they will hate you for it; or if—if you really can feel it,

Louisa, give it to the principal actress—the Siddons of the day."

As lady Selthorpe pronounced these words, her hand that held by Louisa trembled; her whole frame was convulsed, and tears started to her eyes.

"My dear lady," cried Louisa, anxiously starting.

"Hold your tongue, child!"

At this moment a gentleman, high in office, was presented to her ladyship, and received with all that sweet and dignified suavity which marked her usual manners; he was indeed a welcome guest to every one, for he announced the arrival of victory from *****, which had arrived scarcely an hour before, and had been the happy means of delaying his visit.

The happy news spread like wildfire through the room, but in no heart could it awaken more lively interest than poor Louisa's, for Donald was in this division of the army: surely he had distinguished himself; his fame would be her justification;

doubtless he had written to her. How much depended on that letter! either all her fears would be realized, and the baronet's half-hidden prejudice would be acknowledged, or, oh, what an excess of happiness awaited her! the hero of her imagination would be the acknowledged lover of her heart.

The company, the music, the room, swam before her sight, and the late-uttered words of her aunt, which had at once awoke her extreme surprise and her tender sympathy, were forgotten: finding herself unable to control her emotions, which oppressed her almost to fainting, she endeavoured to seek her mother; but on approaching the lower end of the room where she had left them, she perceived them both hanging in great earnestness on the words of colonel Bellair. The colonel was too fashionable a husband to be seen frequently with his lady, or in her parties; but he was a pleasant companion, had been good to Louisa when she was a child at his house, and was even till now seen by her with

pleasure; but at this moment her heart recoiled from him; she turned suddenly away, and in turning, encountered Emma Sefton, who imputed her confusion to the suddenness of their meeting, and by forcing her mind to a new direction, enabled her to recover from the tumult of spirits into which the announced victory had thrown her, and enabled her even to speak of it without betraying the deep interest she experienced; in fact, it was a subject which caused too much emotion to her hearer to subject the relator to remark one difference of opinion was alone perceptible in the young female politicians. Louisa was of opinion that general Graham was decidedly the first general in the world; and Emma thought that, however excellent, he must not be compared to lord Wellington.

"I consider his little force," said Louisa, "as all heroes, and himself a Leonidas—I think Homer's description of the Grecians would apply to them; the men are heroes, the officers demigods!"

"They are all very great, assuredly; but as to thinking them superior to the main army and their wonderful leaders, because they have had a successful sally just now, I cannot say I feel inclined to that at all; to my fancy, there are people with lord Wellington full as like demigods as any that can be met with any where else."

The ladies were called to their dance; and whilst they are going down it, we will inquire into the conversation which was taking place with sir Francis and his brother-in-law.

Free communion seldom took place between these gentlemen, for in fact they seldom met except in large parties, when the baronet always behaved with the utmost frankness and politeness, which was quietly returned by the other, so far, but no farther than good breeding required; there are, however, times when ceremony unbends, and even dislike, when unsanctioned by reason, gives way; and the colonel heard so much admiration buzzed on all sides of him respecting his beautiful niece;

that although the remembrance of her being his wife's heiress made him generally averse from her, he yet felt so far flattered by a connection that was his highest honour, as to be induced to address the baronet, as Louisa led down the dance, in a strain of elegant compliment, which it was impossible for lady Mowbray not to listen to, for the colonel was a man of fashion, a judge of beauty, and was, moreover, very chary of his words in his own family.

"I like her dress too; her style of dancing is good—vastly good; one wouldn't have expected it."

"We have been more anxious Louisa should dance respectably (if I may use so grave a term) than elegantly. I like a sprightly dancer, and a graceful dancer; but in pursuing the first, I don't like to see the giggling friskiness which borders on vulgarity; still less, in affecting the latter, can I endure the languishing system adopted by some young women; if they would steer clear of that rock, I should have no objection to waltzes, (except their stupi-

dity;) as it is, I would not suffer Louisa to engage in them for the world; they are totally unsuitable for young women with her kind of person."

"I think precisely with you, sir Francis; the only people proper to dance waltzes are little, round, dumpling girls, with tall, shambling, ill-made fellows; or long, lean misses, turned of thirty, with little, pudgy, pudding-headed men; in such cases, they are mighty ridiculous, very amusing, and can do no possible harm."

"Except giving us disgust, colonel."

"Oh no—they resemble Coates's acting; we laugh at the performer, and never think of the poet; if we were to see Barry start up again, to charm us in Romeo, we should not like him the less, because his part had been murdered the night before. Ah, here comes Louisa! you are right, sir Francis; that exquisite figure, and that melting eye's blue languish, would be a great deal too good a thing for the present generation; that reminds me of a little Spa-

nish girl I saw last winter, at the count d'Henin's: Gods! what a voluptuous little devil of a dancer she was! the Spanish and Italian women are the women, after all, for some things; there is a charm—a—a—not that I approve them, by any means."

The latter words were spoken in a very low voice; the baronet caught only the words Spanish girl, devil, and dancer; he eagerly inquired her name.

"'Pon my honour, I have forgot; she was, I believe, half English—Miss, Miss—oh, *apropos*! here comes lord Thomas Claverdown; I believe he knows all about her. My lord, will you have the goodness to tell me the name of that pretty black-eyed dulcinea your lordship admired so much at count d'Henin's last winter?"

"Upon my word, colonel, your description is so vague, that really—I protest I——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the young man who held his lordship's arm; "now is this delicacy or affectation for one or the

other? it certainly is, for the divine Antonia, *sans doute*, is not forgotten."

"Antonia! aye, Antonia Maynard! that's the name she went by; what a dolt I must be to forgot it!" cried the colonel; "well, sir Francis, this girl, as I believe I was saying, danced inimitably, sung exquisitely, and played the Spanish guitar to admiration; but as you very justly observed, it was all done in a kind of style, as who should say, 'look at me, and love me,' and——"

"Aye," interrupted lord Thomas's friend, "and with a glance that said, 'I'll love again;' but however, 'twas a fine girl; not the complexion, but the eyes of a bacchante: how admirably she performed Euphrosyne in Comus! at least she gave the song in the very first style—she was, however, never so truly great as in the Devotee; 'twas her beads and rosary that won lord Thomas; who could resist a kneeling beauty?"

"Don't be so foolish, sir Bennett; I never had any thing to say to the girl."

"But she had a good deal to say to you though; and would have said more than she was inclined to perform, if papa had not forbade the bans—ha, ha!"

"Well, well, I forgive your jealousy."

"Jealous! me jealous of a coquette!—no, no—I gave her up from the very first evening; the moment I beheld her set at you, I had done with her: so, thinks I, my little signora has already found out, that although an English chevalier was a very good thing, an English milord is a better. If ever I am caught in the toils of matrimony, it shall not be by a regular hunter; I may be caught in a trap, but I'll never be run down."

"Where is this young lady now?" said the baronet to the colonel.

"Oh, poor girl, she frisked and fluttered to no purpose all last season; and some old don of an uncle, who came over with her, on a fool's errand, to seek her father's relations, took umbrage at her flights, and insisted on her taking the veil, which she

chose to do in England, fancying that this was every where the land of liberty, and accordingly went down to York, I believe, to enter on her noviciate; but some little *faux pas* of peeping at a man alarmed the sisterhood, who forthwith returned her to the uncle, who, enraged, returned in all speed to the land of locks and duennas."

"Yes," cried sir Bennett; "and the best of the joke is, he had scarcely reached the land of his fathers, when the town became full of English officers: by the bye, he's a soldier himself, if a Spaniard can be called a soldier."

"After all," said lord Thomas, "she's a charming girl—she is; and if nunky had not come, I would have tossed up with you which of us should have taken her into keeping; for the fact is, I would have given her any thing but my name."

"Nonsense—the girl will probably have a very fine fortune."

"Not from the blue blood of don del Puego, unless she can find her father's

friends, and I fancy they are all in some undiscovered country, from 'whose bourne no traveller returns."

"Well, well, at any rate, her mother was a woman of family; her education would do honour to the most polished court in Europe, and——"

"The most accomplished opera-house: she is, indeed, a fascinating creature, and will fascinate some of our British officers, I'll answer for it; but she will neither suit the duke your father, nor even the humble pretensions of a country baronet's son, who remembers the unbending purity of his grandmother and her five maiden sisters."

Lady Selthorpe broke up the conversation to introduce the two young men to partners; she said many had entered the room within the last half hour; and added, with a very significant look, "in a very short time, others of the last importance will be here; depend upon it, I shall cut such a dash in the journals as nobody has done this winter."

Sir Francis heard her not; his whole soul,

was wrapt in contemplation of the most distressing kind.

"The surprising assemblage of rank and talent, enlivened by the exhilarating news of the victory, &c. &c." continued the countess.

"So ingenuous, brave, unaffected; it is not to be endured; his mother's heart will be broken!"

Sir Francis, as he thus ejaculated, held up his hand, and perceived what alone could restore tranquillity to his mind, his daughter advancing with Edward Sefton, who had just entered the room, and had begged the favour of Louisa's hand, which was unfortunately engaged for the next four dances.

As soon as Louisa had withdrawn, sir Francis eagerly took Edward aside, and told him all he had heard respecting Antonia, repeating, in all the bitterness of fear and disappointment—"If he marries her, he is lost—utterly lost; it will break his mother's heart, I know it will."

Edward was acquainted with both, their

young men, and had a very high opinion of lord Thomas; he listened in patience to all sir Francis said, until the conclusion of the dance, and then joined his lordship, from whom he gained such particulars as rendered him precisely of sir Francis's opinion as to the impropriety of the match, and the utter impossiblity that to a young man, educated as Henry had been, Antonia could be rendered a source of solid happiness; and at the same time, he was so well aware of the ardour of Henry's mind, who always felt more than he said, that he entertained the greatest fears lest the union should be already sealed: on returning to sir Francis, the agitation he felt was already visible in his features, and his words only seconded their expression.

"What can I do?" said sir Francis, clasping his hands in despair; "it will break his mother's heart! The monthly packet sails on Saturday."

"And if possible, I will sail with it," said Edward.

"How! what do you say?—sail with it, Edward?"

"Yes, my dear sir Francis, that I certainly will, if my mother does not positively forbid; my father will *not:* I am well aware, and so are you, that no letters can, in such a case, supply the presence of a friend; and surely it is in such a case as this that friendship ought to be exerted: do you appoint me your delegate—do you bid me claim, in your name, and that of lady Mowbray, *obedience?*"

"Use any words you will, or can, that may stop the progress of this affair."

"But if she is not unworthy Henry, or if his heart is so attached that he cannot, *cannot* tear it away, you will then, surely you will forgive the error, and be reconciled to receive her?"

"Stick to your first question, if she is not unworthy Henry; in that case, we will certainly receive her; but under present circumstances, we demand time to try and approve. As to talking such nonsense as

to say that time and resolution cannot wear away a foolish passion, for Heaven's sake never let such words pass your lips again."

Edward laid his hand upon his heart, and cast his eyes towards Louisa.

"'Tis hard upon *you*," said sir Francis, following the bent of Edward's eyes; "but if you do indeed perform this generous service, you must have no dancing here to-night; I can, however, venture to assure you, that my daughter will place a proper estimate on this act of pure genuine friendship, whether you are enabled to perform it or not. If you *cannot* go, by which I mean, if your good mother cannot bring herself to part with you, I am determined to go myself."

"Go whither, sir Francis?" said lady Mowbray, just then entering.

"To Spain, my love."

The deadly paleness which overspread lady Mowbray's features gave a new spur to the benevolent friendship of Edward; he grasped sir Francis's hand, and was hastening out of the room, when Louisa, trip-

ping towards them, said hastily—" I am at liberty now."

The tone of frankness and kindness in which she spoke, the air of hilarity which the exercise had given her, and the consciousness, perhaps, how much, at this moment, the sacrifice he was making of his pleasure in leaving her deserved encouragement, gave a momentary pulse of hope and joy to Edward, such as he had never experienced before; he seized her hand, and even pressed it to his lips, saying, as he returned it—" Alas, I am not at liberty *now!* but be assured, Louisa, I would not part with this hand, even for an hour, if it were not to save that heart from sorrow."

Edward wronged his friendship in this speech; but where is the young man so much in love, that would not have done the same? She was before him, in all the blaze of beauty; and he felt the pang of leaving her, at this moment, acutely; he rushed out of the room, unable to speak to her parents, and Louisa and her mother alike looked to sir Francis for an explanation.

The baronet was unable to speak; tears were in his eyes—his voice was suffocated; lady Mowbray was much alarmed; it struck her that they had heard of the illness or death of Henry; and she begged him, for God's sake, to go into the breakfast-parlour, and tell her what he had heard from Spain.

"There is no news from Henry, I know," said Louisa; "no mail has arrived from Corunna; the great news is from Cadiz; Mr. —— told me so himself."

"She is right, perfectly right," said the baronet; "do not terrify yourself, my love; I have fears for Henry, 'tis true, but they are of his marriage, not his death; but I hope Edward will save him; he is ordained, in one way or other, to save us all."

"They are come! they are come! didn't I tell you I should have something extraordinary?" cried the countess, breaking on the little coterie.

Louisa felt the interruption very *mal-apropos*, and she merely raised her head

without speaking, for her heart was full of Henry.

"My dear child," said lady Selthorpe, taking the look for a question, "'tis the wonderful young officer that has done such miracles, and brought home the dispatches; he is coming with his uncle, the earl of—of—what's his new title? he was lord —— here they are, look what a noble creature!"

Louisa did look, and beheld lord Glenfalloch leaning on the arm of Donald Mackenzie.

If, in the early part of the evening, Louisa had trembled and glowed with the idea that Donald, though far distant, was partaking the honours of conquest, how much more was she now affected on beholding him at once before her, not only safe from injury, but basking in the smiles of fortune and victory, glowing with health, surrounded by splendor, moving in the circle where the ambition of love had ever placed him, the admired of every eye, the praised of every tongue!

In a few moments his eye distinguishes

her; he flies to her, he addresses her; her hand trembles in his; she is unequal to congratulate him; but her soft confusion, her palpitating heart, assure him how sincerely she participates his glory, and rejoices in his presence; he withdraws from her, and she is relieved, and as quickly as her trepidation permits, she retires to a bouddir, where tears relieve the fulness of her heart, and she thanks God for his return, and for his success.

In the universal interest which the *entrée* of Donald Mackenzie made, and still more in the wonderful prepossession his commanding person and graceful mien excited, even Louisa was forgotten, and her evident emotion disregarded; and she had remained long enough to regain some degree of composure and self-possession, when the viscountess hastily entering, entreated her to come immediately and dance with the young officer to whom she had promised her hand.

"How monstrous odd it is, by the way,

that you should all be acquainted with him, and never say any thing about him! it appears to me that there must be a reason for your silence, for surely there never could be a finer subject, especially for country people, who read romances; the man's handsome enough for Oroondates. How fortunate I am! but *allons*—don't keep the paragon waiting."

Lady Selthorpe, all the time she spoke, had been arranging her own head-dress. Louisa's eyes were still red; and as she returned into the room, she met Emma Sefton, who saw it immediately.

"My dear Miss Mowbray," said she, "I guess your feelings; but have a good heart; your brother may return soon, crowned with laurels too, and there are people who think him quite as handsome as captain Mackenzie; but he really is a prodigious fine man, I must confess that; I don't wonder at poor Adelaide being so much charmed with him."

Emma could say no more; Louisa was hurried away before she had time to pity,

Adelaide; she was too much oppressed by the gaze of the multitude to acquit herself so well as she did in the earlier part of the evening; and Donald, though proud of his partner, was yet too conscious of his own importance to lend her all the aid he might have done. They were, however, universally pronounced a peerless pair; and the earl of Callander, late lord Glenalloch, justly proud of his nephew, repeated this in every possible way, a thousand times. He paid the most particular attention to sir Francis and lady Mowbray, and repeatedly said, in the hearing of many, that himself and the country were indebted to sir Francis, for bringing to light the talents and valour of his young relative.

Lady Mowbray, ever an admirer of Donald, could not forbear enjoying the honours that surrounded him, and inquiring of the earl into the particulars of the action which he announced, and the share he had taken in it. It led her to hope that the time might shortly arrive when her own

son might be equally the subject of praise, rather than the blame which had of late been attaching to him, at least in his own family, for she felt, as she was wont, all the triumphs of a soldier; nor could she forbear wishing to see her daughter given to a Mackenzie. With her, courage, like charity, covered a multitude of sins; and in the enthusiasm of the moment, she thought poor Donald's trifling errors infinitely more than effaced by the splendor which his gallantry cast around him; and when to this was added the predilection which Louisa felt for him, how could she help wishing for the union of two so evidently designed for each other by nature and inclination, to whose welfare even fortune now paved the way, both by the promise of rank and property.

"Thank God!" whispered the baronet, "the wind is changing; in twenty-two hours Edward will sail. I have received a note from him—his mother has consented. I will go down to Falmouth with him—so good-night, or rather good-morning."

Lady Mowbray felt as if she were branded with the name of ingrate for ever.

"We will go together. How much I am indebted to——certainly we will go together."

"By no means; Louisa must be your care; and surely you are aware that is a terrible moment."

Sir Francis checked his steps; he was evidently agitated; he despised mistrust, yet he could not tear it from his heart; he had watched the countenance of his lady for the last half hour, and he was too well acquainted with its ingenuous expression not to see how her inclinations stood; but his dependance on her principles was secure; he took her hand, and gently leading her into the breakfast-parlour, he shut the door, with an air in which it was evident that nothing less than a matter of infinite importance could have detained him for a moment.

"Lady Mowbray, I have often called upon your love, sometimes, I fear, on your forbearance, and neither of them have ever

failed me; surely you will not think me unkind, if, in a moment of extreme solicitude, I call, yes, expressly call, for your *obedience?*"

"My dear sir Francis, you distress me."

"I am myself distressed; Louisa, I cannot command you, for I cannot doubt you; but I beseech, I entreat you, to watch over my child; guard both her heart and your own from the impending mischief, and do not deceive yourselves with the hope that *I* will ever be favourable to Mackenzie's views, if he has any, on Louisa. His vanity may be her protection till my return, for the eyes of many are upon him; but I had rather owe her safety to her own wisdom and her mother's vigilance."

Lady Mowbray's eye, for the first time, bent beneath the penetrating gaze of her husband; she was conscious that he suspected her, even beyond his words, and she feared that she merited thus much of his reproaches.

"Stay with us—do not leave us; I dare not engage to—to——"

"Louisa, you have made me a father; to you I am indebted for a new species of existence, for the purest and highest enjoyment of which my nature is capable; I trust I have been grateful; and——"

The baronet stopped, unable to proceed; his wife, bursting into tears, flung herself into his arms, endeavouring, but in vain, to express her sense of what she owed him; the baronet pressed her to his heart.

"Do not, my love, sully your own gift; preserve to me the happiness I experience in my child."

"I will, I will," sobbed the mother.

The baronet departed; his lady, utterly unequal to return to the room, sent for Louisa, who was, at that very moment, drinking largely of that intoxicating cup about to be dashed for ever from her lips, for Donald was whispering the pains of absence, the inspiration of love, no longer in the timid tone of a despondent wanderer, but

as one who had a right to approach her, and in the assurance of his heart, she felt that of her own.

When the messenger informed her that sir Francis had set out for home, to dress for a journey, and that lady Mowbray was anxious to follow him, Louisa felt as if she were recalled to a world which she had left, and troubles whose existence were equally strange and futile; but she instantly obeyed the summons, bidding good-night

"—————————— with such sweet sorrow,
She could have said good-night, until 'twere morrow."

In their short ride home, Louisa learnt the cause of her father's journey, which was merely an act of grateful complaisance to Edward Sefton, on whose heroic friendship lady Mowbray dwelt with all the grateful warmth it so richly merited. They reached their own door at the very moment sir Francis was entering his travelling carriage; Louisa sprang from the coach, and forgetting every thing but her father, held out her arms, and mounted

the step; the baronet caught her eagerly to his breast—"My good, *good* girl, I will be with you again very soon."

Louisa looked at him; his face was pale, his eyes were red; his whole frame was agitated.

"Dear, *dear* father! Henry is not married; why are you so very unhappy?"

"I am not unhappy, Louisa; I am only a little agitated; were he married, I should indeed be unhappy, but how much more so if *you*——"

His lip trembled—he was relapsing into a weakness he strove to conquer; tenderly kissing her, he disengaged himself from her embrace; and Louisa, torn at once from the heaven of imagination, was assisted, almost fainting, into the house, where her mother received her, in a situation little less to be envied.

CHAP. II.

Whatever might hitherto have been lady Mowbray's silent wishes or latent hopes respecting the future union of her daughter with Donald Mackenzie, from this time forward she studiously, though meekly, opposed every means of increasing the flame, or encouraging the expectation in that daughter's breast; hitherto the life she had led with sir Francis had been so tranquil, that, except in her fears for, and partings from, her son, she had never shed a tear, save the sweetly grateful drops awakened by the kindness of her husband. But she now felt that dormant virtues were called for—that her fortitude, patience, and submission must be exercised.

Sir Francis, though a man of acute sensibility, possessed so much self-command, and had such a decided aversion to the parade of feeling, that she was convinced

nothing less than the deepest, the most agonizing solicitude, could have affected him to the degree he had expressed: He was not used to make solemn addresses and tender appeals; the mildness of his commands, the reasonableness of his service, saved him from the trouble of particular peremptoriness, and he was so generally affectionate, that it was almost difficult for him to become particularly endearing; when, however, he did step out of his way to excite interest or claim duty, his claims were indeed felt in every fibre of the heart; the tremulous tone, the quivering lip of the baronet, sunk deep in the bosom of both his wife and daughter, but especially with the former, whose breast vibrated to every tone of grateful recollection, perfect esteem, and conjugal tenderness, and who had long indulged in the full conviction that herself and son had possessed in him a friend without a parallel.

When sorrow had subsided, fatigue and lateness of the hour equally induced both lady Mowbray and her daughter to indulge

in repose; the latter, in despite of the shock she had undergone, dreamt only of Donald; she awoke with a sense of pleasure on her spirits, which was banished thence the moment she beheld her mother, whose countenance expressed care and perturbation: whilst she was inquiring after her health, the servant informed her that captain Mackenzie was below.

"Who?" cried lady Mowbray, eagerly rising.

"Mr. Donald Mackenzie, my lady."

The mother sat down again, pale and trembling.

"My dear mother," said Louisa, herself little less agitated, "pray compose yourself; your anxiety about my brother will destroy your nerves."

"Your brother was not in my thoughts till the servant announced Donald by a name that can never fail to awaken my nerves; the fact, you know, is, that Henry only became captain Mackenzie when he changed the name; *n'importe.*—Inform the captain," said she to the servant, "that I

am much indisposed, and that Miss Mowbray cannot leave me; we must therefore postpone the pleasure of seeing him until sir Francis's return, which we expect in two or three days."

Silence, deep as the Egyptian night, succeeded in the dressing-room; it was not the gloom of sullenness, nor the stupefaction of astonishment, that sat on the brow of Louisa, for she was utterly devoid of the first, and certain symptoms had rendered the last impossible; yet certainly she did experience a degree of surprise. She felt the rumblings of the atmosphere which precede an earthquake, and trembled for the succeeding moment; for the first time in her life she thought her mother unkind and unjust.

This novel and distressing silence was relieved towards evening, by the arrival of lady Selthorpe, who, worn out with the exertions of the preceding day, and yet unable to encounter the harrassing train of thought solitude never failed to present

her, came for the purpose of cheering, and being cheered by the relations she loved; never had she seen them in such a situation before, for though Louisa had frequently been languid, she had never been gloomy, nor had an air of dissatisfaction ever before sat on her mother's brow; but though new in this family, as lady Selthorpe frequently saw it in others, she knew the way to parry it; and the sweetness of her temper, as well as the sincere affection she felt for the parties, induced her to exert herself to the utmost for their amusement; she spoke of the company most worthy of remark the evening before, gave various sketches of characters and histories, but never touched on those which were apparently most interesting to those whom she addressed; and though very desirous of being acquainted with every thing respecting Donald, and their knowledge of him, she forbore all inquiry, and from motives of the same delicacy, forbore every comment on her brother's sudden

journey, and the supposed situation of Henry.

"What a charming companion lady Selthorpe is!" said lady Mowbray to her daughter, as their kind visitant withdrew.

"Indeed she is," returned Louisa, who, although extremely unhappy, felt, to a certain degree, relieved; "tis a pity——"

Louisa checked herself, unable to speak on the thing nearest her heart; she yet had felt as if her mother had a right to some species of confidence, and she was about to mention the conversation she had held with her aunt; but a moment's recollection told her that she had no right to reveal what had passed; conversations in which any extraordinary confidence takes place, are undoubtedly sacred, even where the seal of secresy is not demanded; and although Louisa, till now, had never concealed even the wanderings of her imagination from her mother, she felt that she had no right to mention the surmises she held respecting even one whom they mutually loved.

When Louisa thus checked herself, her mother looked fondly and anxiously towards her; and when she thus abruptly stopped, she gave a deep sigh, as if to the memory of past happiness; but she could not go farther; she wished to speak openly to Louisa of all that so much concerned them both, the determination of sir Francis; but she felt unequal to destroy even the temporary complacency their visitant had given to her feelings; and they parted for the night affectionately but silently, as to the subject that occupied them both; nor did the following day remove their restraint on this subject, though they were evidently each more alive to that tenderness which had so long constituted the happiness of their lives.

Late in the evening of the following day sir Francis returned; he was worn down with fatigue, and looked wretchedly; but he spoke with cheerfulness of his journey, as he had had the pleasure of parting with his young friend, under all the ad-

vantages of wind and weather: he inquired eagerly "who they had seen, and where they had been during his absence?"

"We have never quitted my dressing-room, nor seen any one but your sister."

"That is well—but it might have been better; lady Welbrooke had a claim on your attention."

"I have written her a long letter, expressive, I hope, of my gratitude; she has answered it, and promised me a visit to-morrow."

"Have you had any conversation with Louisa?"

"None—I had not the courage to attempt it. I have leaned on you till I cannot step alone without you."

"Fie, my love, you undervalue your own powers; you once could stand alone, and even support another."

"True; but adversity braces the mind, prosperity unnerves it; I can merely engage to do no mischief by my weakness, but I am unequal to more; to see Louisa suffer, requires the whole extent of my fortitude."

"Were she married to Donald, you would be called upon for that fortitude all the rest of your life; for, depend upon it, he would never make her happy. I have weighed his character in every point; I have examined his mind, his heart, his habits, and his temper, and in every point they are discordant with hers. Many women may be happy with him, because, though to a certain degree attached to him, and naturally proud of him, they may yet possess pleasure and content independent of him; but this will never be the case with Louisa; she will love him so dearly, that from him alone must she receive all the good or evil of her existence; the remark of Madame de Stael respecting women of genius, will exactly apply to her, as a devoted wife; "her sorrows are multiplied through her faculties; she makes discoveries in her own internal pain, and the woes of the heart being inexhaustible, the more ideas we have, the more we feel them."

"It cannot be possible for a woman to love her husband too well."

"Yes—very possible, where her love is neither duly estimated, nor properly returned."

"But who shall say that will not be the case, when a woman is formed to attract, and her husband a man capable of being attracted?"

"I will maintain that a selfish, ungrateful, haughty temper, even when allied to the warmest passion, and unstained by the grosser vices, never can make a tender, confiding, affectionate heart happy, especially when united to an enlightened mind, a penetrating judgment, capable of shewing these deficiencies in virtue, which time never fails to reveal in close connections."

"But does not love veil the faults of the beloved?"

"It may, perhaps, in vulgar minds; but I appeal to your own heart, in a case where it is usually supposed human nature is peculiarly blind—have you seen no faults in your son? did he grow up perfect in your eyes?—certainly not, for if

he had, you would not have taken the pains you did to correct his temper and lead his understanding; yet was he ever so amiable, and had so many excellent points about him, that it was plain your extraordinary love, your true tenderness, pointed out his *errors*, and rendered you doubly solicitous to correct them; love wishes for perfection in its object, and the grief it experiences in beholding its high-wrought expectations blasted, is in proportion to the power of its imagination, and the excellence of its model. Women experience the bitterness of disappointment frequently more than men, because their fancy is more vivid and their love more exquisite; and therefore, in some cases, they certainly do love their husbands too well, on their entrance into married life, for their own future happiness."

Lady Mowbray mused on this doctrine; her own experience had presented two distinct species of happiness, and she knew not which to choose for her daughter; but all early prejudice, the very feelings of

nature, were in favour of the first, and she felt as if the wife of a captain Mackenzie were entitled to happiness; but she could not deny that there were traits in what might be called the lower tones, the finishing shades of Donald's character, very inimical to Louisa's peace, and such as she had never been called to contend with; and common sense informed her that it was better to suffer for a short time than a long one—to tear up a youthful passion by the roots, than suffer the miseries arising from an ill-assorted connection; but she dreaded such an operation upon the mind of a being so constituted as her gentle Louisa, and felt more willing to "endure the ills she had, than fly to others which she knew not of;" and although she knew that sir Francis was, in every other case, slow to judge, and ever candid in his judgment, yet she could not help suspecting that an overweening partiality to Edward Sefton was at the bottom of his prejudice against Donald; and when she thought on Edward,

she was only surprised that the same partiality did not influence herself; how then could she blame that which she desired to imitate? how could she help wishing that one whom she knew to be all that her heart could desire, should be indeed the chosen of Louisa's affections?

Louisa received her father with tenderness, not unmixed with terror: such was her admiration of Donald, as well as affection, that she could not feel as if her father could possibly blame the love he might refuse to sanction, when it should be declared; but she felt considerable self-reproach, at this time, for having received a letter which she had not submitted to her parents. The pale and haggard appearance of her father, the recollection of his parting words, wrung her heart—"and yet," she said to herself, "what can he object to Donald, whom he himself brought forward, but the want of fortune, and even that may be removed?"

On this head she was not doomed to re-

main long in suspense: sir Francis had not risen from his breakfast-table, when the earl of Callander was announced.

Louisa read, in the particular attentions of the earl to herself, that her fate hung upon the interview; utterly unable to check the burning blushes that tingled in her cheeks, or the terrible beating in her heart, she hastily withdrew; her mother being in her dressing room, furnished a pretext; and at this awful moment she found herself compelled to seek that mother; rushing into the room, she threw herself into lady Mowbray's arms, and hid her burning cheek upon her bosom.

At length, mid broken sentences, tears, and half-uttered confessions, lady Mowbray learnt who was below, and the supposed occasion of his conference.

The mother summoned all her courage; she pressed her child to her bosom, praised her love, and the constant obedience she had ever shewn to her parents, and then gently leading her to a sofa, besought her

to compose herself, and prepare for an interview with her father, which she was afraid would be painful.

Louisa burst into an agony of tears, such as she had never experienced in the whole course of her life; it was not wholly grief that shook her thus; she felt as if she were injured, and resentment mixed with her sorrow; at length she cried, almost inarticulately—"How has Donald offended my father, that he is so cruelly, so unjustly prejudiced against him?"

"Your father is neither cruel nor unjust, Louisa."

"Why did he admire him?—why bring him here, and seek himself to forward his views, if he thought him unworthy his patronage?—was it consistent with——but, my dear mother," she cried, checking herself, "if lord Callander interferes—if he offers a fortune to his heir which my father's *prudence* deems suitable?"

"My dear child, do not deceive yourself, nor reflect upon your father; his prudence does not consist in sordid or il-

liberal views; and if he esteemed Donald a fit husband for you, considering him a gentleman, and one rising fast in his profession, he would not cast objections of that description in your way; yet, I fear, I believe, he will not consent to your receiving his addresses."

"And what other reason can he assign?"

"Perhaps he may not be pressed for reasons, since it is certain, that many may operate, trifling when separate, but weighty altogether."

"And is the happiness of a child to be sacrificed for trifles? Oh mother, mother! do not desert me—do not look at me! I confess that—that I love this Donald!"

"But you love your parents also, Louisa?"

"I do—and if I injured them by my regard for him, though my heart should break, I would resign him; but for a mere prejudice—an objection without a name—a——"

"Your father is coming; do not add to

his mortification by this violent grief; you know not what it costs him to afflict you, Louisa; remember what a father he has ever been to you—remember how I am indebted, and that your disobedience may break the sacred bond which has united your parents!"

At this moment sir Francis opened the door, and in a fresh agony of grief she was utterly unable to control, Louisa ran out of the room. Sir Francis beheld her swollen eyes, and felt a pang that chilled his heart; he sat down on the nearest chair, and covered his face with his hands; lady Mowbray pitied him sincerely, for she fully sympathized in his feelings; she was aware that Louisa's sufferings could hardly exceed those of her father.

After some minutes of expressive silence, she ventured to say—"I have now done my duty; I have prepared Louisa for any communications you may have to make, my love."

Sir Francis, giving a deep sigh, recovered himself, and began to give her an ac-

count of the interview which had taken place with the earl of Callander.

The earl had, as Louisa expected, claimed sir Francis's permission for his nephew to pay his addresses, in form, to Miss Mowbray, and had made such offers, in point of settlements, as were unexceptionable; he had slightly adverted to his late success, and declared that he was so satisfied with his conduct, in other respects, during the last five months, as to entirely have wiped away all recollection of his former peccadilloes towards *himself*; and as he was convinced that his love and esteem for Miss Mowbray had greatly improved his character in those points requisite for domestic felicity, so he had no doubt but an union with one so truly amiable would entirely obliterate even the memory of his foibles, which, perhaps, after all, could be only deemed such in the eyes of an old bachelor like himself.

"Your lordship is a kind advocate, as well as a generous relative," said sir Francis; "and I beg you to believe me truly

sincere, when I thank you for the honour you intend my daughter, and assure you that captain Mackenzie has my sincere congratulations on his merit and success; but my answer to your lordship's proposals must be decisive; I decline the honour, and beg that——"

"My dear sir Francis, consider—you have not consulted your daughter; and—and—you will excuse my saying, that Donald had some reason to hope, before he went abroad, that his person was not disagreeable to the young lady; we have some claims on your esteem for his forbearance, considering the youth of the parties, and the situation in which they stood. My nephew was aware that he must win his way to fame and fortune, and he has bravely used the sword your "kindness put into his hand;" surely you will not thus hastily reject him—you will reconsider the matter—you will consult your daughter and lady Mowbray; it is very unlike all I have heard of you, to act the part of a tyrannical father."

"Particular circumstances sometimes occur, in which it becomes a man to endure the reproach of others, in order to avoid his own; your lordship gave yourself a clue to some particulars, which, however trivial they may now appear to your eyes, have, together with a determined partiality to another person, induced me to act as I now do; permit me to say, that had captain Mackenzie indeed forborne to address my daughter, previous to his departure—a circumstance I gave him full credit for till now, he would not, I trust, have discovered that she preferred him; but this I wave discussing, (not from any fear of examining Louisa's conduct); so fine a young man as your nephew must often see himself admired; but we cannot always marry those whom we distinguish, my lord."

His lordship gave a deep sigh, as if the sorrows of days long past rose to his recollection from this remark; he saw, in the countenance of sir Francis, that he was decided, and that, in a certain degree, "more was meant than met the ear;" he

therefore only begged to know if he might be permitted to soften this refusal to his nephew, by saying, that sir Francis's honour was concerned in a pre-engagement of his good offices with his daughter?

"You are welcome to say this, my lord, provided I may rely on such words not being reported to my daughter. I will be candid with you, my lord; I do not wish Louisa to believe that I take her from a lover she may, and, honestly speaking, she *does* approve, for the sake of one whom *I* prefer, since such circumstance would doubtless prejudice her against him; the fact being, that my feelings, rather than my honour, is on his side; the degree of encouragement I gave his father, not himself, being so bounded, that my daughter's inclination exonerates me."

"If your daughter's wishes were sacred *then*, it appears strange that they are no longer so; my nephew is a man of honour—his moral character, among his brother officers, stands high; his career in glory is already such as to give him the ex-

pectation of receiving honour from his sovereign!"

"'Tis all very true, my lord; and had this passion 'grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength,' had it been cemented by time or affliction, or arisen from similarity of taste, habit, or disposition, never would I have even thought of dissolving it; but it has done none of these; and, therefore, I believe, that like all other wounds given by fancy and circumstance, it may be worn out—sooner a great deal in Donald's heart than Louisa's; but I trust the time will come when, with both of them, it will be so completely eradicated, as not to leave a scar behind."

"You really think so?"

"Indeed I do; and on that persuasion I act."

"Well then, I will tell you honestly, that much as I really admire Miss Mowbray, I would greatly prefer Emma Sefton as a wife for my nephew, because I not

only know her better, and love her better than any other young woman, but because she is better calculated for the wife of one who is a little headstrong and passionate, than any one I ever saw; her good-nature is inexhaustible; and though she possesses great feeling, she has such a regular flow of spirits, that she would not suffer the vagaries of a husband to destroy her happiness; that might not be precisely the case with Miss Mowbray."

"Indeed it would not, my lord; for although I have ever endeavoured to preserve Louisa from the miseries which spring from indulgence, yet her sensibilities are by nature so acute, her imagination so vivid, and her heart so intensely affectionate, that with all my cares, she remains what nature made her; and I therefore feel it my particular duty, since I cannot render her independent of the 'ills of feeling,' to give her a partner who shall awaken the 'nerve where agony is born,' as seldom as possible, and whose devotion to her shall ensure her the con-

stant intercourse of friendship, gratitude, and virtue, as the only certain foundation of happiness to a woman, especially one like her."

With mutual good wishes, and a sincere sense of esteem for each other, the gentlemen parted. Sir Francis, after relating this conversation, desired his lady to communicate all that was necessary to his daughter, and inform her that he was extremely anxious to converse with her himself on the subject, if she felt herself equal to it, but he would on no account force the subject upon her. His conduct proved that he expected obedience to his will, but he neither looked for cheerful acquiescence, nor servile compliance; he was either willing to hear, and answer her objections, or give her leisure to digest his measures; his heart and his arms were open to her, but he sympathized with her sorrow too sincerely, he loved her too fondly, to force her to the slightest exertion beyond simple obedience.

Louisa chose only her mother; and sel-

dom even her, to be the witness of her excessive sorrow; she would have entirely shunned every eye; but lady Mowbray was too much alarmed for her health, too fearful that a species of suffering, so sacred to every delicate female, should subject her to the animadversion of servants; and in never leaving her daughter's apartment, she had likewise the satisfaction of knowing that she spared her from the temptation to any clandestine correspondence which Donald might have attempted, and which could only have prolonged the sorrows of both.

As his leave of absence would expire in a month, and as the "pomp and circumstance of war," especially at a time when he was enjoying its rewards, might be supposed in *his* favour, lady Mowbray was led, by a review of this circumstance, to conclude that change of scene might be good for Louisa; and as she refused all the pleatures of London, proposed their returning to the country.

Sir Francis hoped that Louisa would not

return without seeing more of the metropolis, the variety of whose amusements would doubtless interest her by-and-by; he promised to vary the present melancholy monotony, by taking a country villa for a few months, as it would be equally attainable for the comfort of retirement and the pleasures of society; and as the season was favourable for the purpose, they were soon accommodated with a charming house on the banks of the Thames, at Twickenham, whither they removed, and where Louisa, for the first time, took her seat at the dinner-table with her father.

Louisa looked pale and eat little; but as it was a fine day, the close of February, she could not forbear to remark the extraordinary beauty of the scene around her. Sir Francis pointed out its peculiar features, in a cheerful, unaffected tone, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt their family harmony; but unfortunately lady Mowbray, in speaking likewise of the scenery in this neighbourhood, was led to

discriminate the difference in its features with that of Lock Katrine in the Highlands. Louisa burst into a flood of tears, and hastily quitted the apartment, which she did not revisit that evening.

CHAP. III.

The following morning Louisa entered the breakfast-room, which happened to be so situated as to enjoy the most beautiful part of the river, and which, therefore, drew her attention almost in despite of herself; such are the advantages of a cultivated taste, even in a season of affliction. Lady Mowbray observing the earnestness with which she gazed upon it, laid her portfolio and pencils beside her, hoping that she might be induced to use them, having hitherto in vain attempted to seduce her into employment of any kind.

"Will you take a drive to Hampton-court, or any part of this beautiful neighbourhood?" said the baronet.

"Most willingly," returned his lady.

Sir Francis rung to order the carriage; but Louisa, by laying her hand on the folio, and taking out a sheet of paper, as if

to sketch, indicated an intention of declining to accompany them; they therefore contented themselves with kindly wishing her a good-morning, trusting that, in the exercise of her faculties, she would recover the serenity of her mind, better than by any forced exertion. They were well aware that whatever might be the ardour of her passion for Donald, that she dearly loved her parents, and that, if they had remonstrated with her on the coldness and silence into which her disappointment had plunged her, she would have wept bitterly, and repented deeply the anguish she inflicted; but such sorrow would have nourished that sensibility they sought rather to subdue than excite, since as soon as her affectionate affliction towards her parents had subsided, her heart would have reverted with new fondness, and more poignant sorrow, towards the object from whom they wished to wean her. Sir Francis had been compelled to demand obedience, but he was anxious to produce rational conviction of its necessity, rather

by an elucidation, which the unfolding progress of time could assist him in offering, than reasons offered to the judgment, at a time when the heart had blinded it.

The window where Louisa sat opened on a lawn which descended to the river, which was its only fence; unconscious of the lapse of time, tedious and joyless as it was, she knew only that she was alone, and all around her silent, when she was somewhat roused by the splashing of the water near her; she looked up, and beheld, with a kind of dismay which was yet not unmixt with pleasure, the form she had persuaded herself she should never behold again. Donald Mackenzie stood before her! he had sprung from a little boat, and was, with eager hand, pushing up the window which descended to the lawn, and thus entering, unseen by any one, into the house.

He entered, and in a moment threw himself at her feet: his air was disturbed, his face pale, his eyes indicative of a disordered and disturbed mind, in which va-

rious passions strove for mastery, and all his usual eloquence and commanding energy appeared to fail him; but never surely had he been, at any moment, so interesting to Louisa as now: she felt that it was wrong to admit him, wrong to look upon him, with the unutterable pity and tenderness which she felt, but it was likewise impossible not to do it; nor could she withdraw the hand which Donald had seized, and was pressing between his own; the very circumstance which parted had united them; and those looks of love, which a regular and approved suiter might have long sought in vain from the modest and retiring Louisa, seemed only the due of the disappointed and unhappy Donald; her father might command her hand, but surely she had a right to the disposal of her heart: the struggles of many days, the tears, the prayers, the collected fortitude,—of an age of sorrow, seemed dissipated in a moment.

Donald was not slow to see his advantage; he depicted his passion in glowing

language—for the hope of success renewed his powers; and when he once found utterance, he became again himself—the romantic hero, the youthful warrior, that, bursting from the shades of obscurity, had dazzled her senses and enchanted her heart; and as she gazed upon him and listened to him, she was astonished how it was possible for any human being to withstand him, or how it could come to pass that her father should not be proud of his alliance.

"Louisa!" cried Donald, "do not attempt drawing from me this dear hand, which your cruel father forbids me; rather consent that it shall be mine for ever! though your lips have been silent, your eyes, more kind, have told me that you are not indifferent to my fate; and urged by the hope they have communicated, I have watched you night and day, and the happy absence of your jailors gives me a moment that may never be recalled; listen to me, I beseech you!"

Louisa was listening as if her whole soul were in her ears; but the words "cruel fa-

ther," and "jailors," even in the moment when she was inclined to think them so herself, somewhat offended her feelings: the deathy paleness of her face gave way, and her parched lips strove to answer.

"In ten days," continued Donald, "I must again return to Spain; I must brave the horrors of the opening campaign; shall I go unblest by hope? shall the laurels, which were only dear to me because they rendered me more worthy of you, be steeped in the tears of regret, be blasted by the lightning of despair? Have you considered, Louisa, what must be the consequence of sending the man you make wretched into the field of battle?"

Louisa shuddered, and with difficulty answered—"I cannot—dare not—must not *disobey* my father!"

"*Disobey!*—strange that a mind like yours should submit to trammels so utterly repugnant to reason; your father does not even object to me; he offers no motive but sheer caprice—he is a tyrant of the first order—he compels you to sacrifice

the purest affection of the heart, the fairest prospect of life, on its very entrance, to the whim of the hour—a whim which, perhaps, ere I have half crossed the seas, he may repent."

"Oh no!—he never will repent; he is not whimsical, nor was he ever capricious till now."

"And will you, whose judgment he has enlightened, whose heart he has formed to the noblest sentiments, submit to a decision which condemns me to misery and yourself to unhappiness? Can you, for a moment, think yourself bound to obey a man who, in this claim upon it, acts unworthy of himself, and at once injures another and degrades his own character? Oh no, you will not be at once so weak and so cruel! fly with me, Louisa—you are independent—your wiser uncle, knowing doubtless the errors to which your father was subject, opened the power of emancipation to you; consider the situation to which you reduce me—consider the agonies to which you subject yourself,

in condemning me to hunt for death as a relief from a life of insupportable—yes, insupportable misery!"

"Has your uncle sent you to ask me this?"

"My uncle! Do you think a passion like mine asks what the cold unfeeling hearts of fathers and uncles dictate? no—but I ask you now only to forgive me—I have been mistaken, Miss Mowbray—dreadfully mistaken; I ask you only to forgive me!"

Donald, at this moment, threw away the hand of Louisa, and casting himself on a sofa, hid his face with his hands; his whole frame was convulsed—his heart throbbed violently, and deep groans only, at long intervals, escaped his lips; Louisa, terrified by his situation, and deeply affected by his passion, forgot, for the moment, every thing but him: she felt herself a species of murderer; and she hung over him with agony painted in every feature, beseeching him to be calm—entreating him to speak to her, and assuring him that her

own sufferings had been not less poignant than his; but he appeared to hear her not; love, rage, disappointment, were alike rending his very heart. At length starting, he exclaimed—"I thought your heart free as the air that swept my own native heath—exalted as the mountains, and pure as the lakes, amongst which I beheld you, and from which the voice of ambition never should have torn me but for the claims of love! For you I left the best inheritance of man—*independence!* for you I submitted to the shackles of custom—the slavery of obligation; and for you, contrary to the first principles my soul imbibed, I waded through the blood of my fellow-men, to snatch the glories of dear-earned victory! and will you—can you, Louisa, suffer me, after all, to lose the only prize I really sought?—no, no—you are not so barbarous—you do—you must relent; you are aware that we have no time to lose, and——"

Louisa had indeed looked consent, but

it was in the moment of terror; as Donald recovered his speech, reason resumed her sway; and though she had no time to canvass it, and really felt all the severity of the disappointment he so rapidly and affectingly described, she yet felt also the utter impossibility of complying with his wishes.

Every feeling of virgin dignity, as well as parental duty, shrunk from the thought; but the terrible distress he had so lately experienced made her unable to find words to express herself so as to soften his grief and vexation. He mistook the grief and silence in which she stood trembling beside him, for the emotions of one bidding internally farewell, and gazing on her tearful eyes, he exclaimed—" Why all this struggling against prejudices which exist only in consequence of error in your education, and which your mother—a mother of whom you are justly proud, overcame? she dared to elope with a Mackenzie! and although doomed, as I have heard, to sorrows and poverty, which you can never

know, yet never has she repented; why then should not you escape from a tyrant who——"

"Tyrant!" exclaimed Louisa, all the long-repressed springs that were collected in her beating heart rushing to her pallid cheeks; "a tyrant!"

"Yes, tyrant!" repeated Donald, his eyes flashing fire, and his whole frame betraying the disorder of anger as much as it lately had done that of grief, as he continued, "does he not dare to refuse his daughter to a man who never offended him—whose character even his malice cannot traduce—whose family is far more ancient than his own—and who will one day raise her to a rank far beyond his hopes? Tyrant! yes—he is a *despicable tyrant!*"

Louisa sunk, pale and trembling, on the nearest chair; every limb shook; but her heart, for a short time, seemed to cease its beating; her lips were pale as death, and the light seemed to recede

from her eyes; she looked the very victim of terror; she gasped as if expiring.

"Distraction! what have I said!" cried Donald, dropping on his knees, and fanning her with his hat; "oh Louisa! fairest, best of all God's creatures! look at me—pardon—I am mad—'tis too true I am mad; but 'tis my passion for you that has driven me to this: pity me, Louisa, pity me!"

Louisa uttered a long heart-rending sigh.

"You are ill—can I get you any thing?"

"Nothing—we must part!"

"Part! impossible! but if we *must*, indeed, tell me when I shall see you again? how can I convey you a letter?"

"There is no way; our parting must be decisive! I must obey my father."

"And can you talk thus coldly of parting, Louisa?"

"Captain Mackenzie, after what you have seen me suffer, you cannot think me indifferent; I am indeed ill—sick at heart! I cannot canvass my feelings further; leave me, I beseech you!"

"I will leave you, but not for *ever*, Louisa?"

"Yes, for ever! may God bless you!—forget me!"

"Never, never! I cannot forget you, nor will I resign you!—your cruel father—but I forbear."

"You do well; my father is not cruel, nor unjust; at all events, cost what it will, I will obey him!—farewell!"

"Oh God! oh God! this is too much!"

At this moment Louisa was endeavouring to rise; as, with a trembling hand, she pointed to the window, the rumbling of a carriage was heard on the other side of the house, and Louisa was again ready to faint. Donald, gazing on her with impassioned fondness and bitter agony, was about to clasp her in his arms, when voices were heard approaching them; he therefore obeyed her eye, and vaulting on the lawn, through the open window, was instantly out of sight. Louisa rose, endeavouring to close the sash, but the effort was beyond her strength; she fell down on the floor,

and exhausted nature took refuge in a swoon.

"Is my daughter still in the breakfast-parlour?" said lady Mowbray to the servant, as she alighted from the carriage.

"Miss Mowbray has not rung," said the man, "and I rather think she has not left the room."

The parents proceeded together, and, with equal alarm and sorrow, beheld the being whose every feeling and movement was of the last importance to them, stretched on the floor, in a temporary death, which, from the extreme rigidity of her features, appeared final. Soon they became sensible that it was only fainting, and immediately applied the usual restoratives; but though she opened her eyes, the power of speech seemed denied, and grateful for this relief, they would not tease her with questions. As the sofa was pressed, they concluded that she had found herself ill, and laid down upon it; and that afterwards finding the faintness increase, she had opened the window for air, but unable

to reach the bell, had sunk down in the manner they had found her. These comments and observations Louisa distinctly heard, and they helped to restore to her the recollection of all that was past, and to console her with the idea that she should not be called upon to speak of this interview until she was more equal to it. She lay for some time in a state which appeared to those around her but little removed from the inanity she had escaped; but at length she began to weep, and her mother hailed these tears as the heralds of returning reason, and dismissed her attendants.

Louisa was not suffered to weep long in peace; a servant had been dispatched for medical assistance when she was first discovered, and a gentleman of the faculty now entered with him, and lady Mowbray endeavoured to account for her tears as arising from the alarm they all experienced. The gentleman said he perceived strong sedatives were necessary, recommended quietness, and administered an anodyne.

Louisa was willing to be tranquil; her lacerated heart sought for at least a temporary respite from suffering.

This respite did not appear to be found in the sleep which followed her soporific draught; she frequently started, and spoke incoherently, and tears were on her eyelids; it was with difficulty the affectionate mother, who watched by her couch, prevented her own; but she repressed them for the sake of the afflicted father, who, continually traversing the room, with long and hasty steps, seemed seeking ease for his perturbed spirits, in the motion of his limbs. As from time to time he looked at his daughter, the paleness of her face, the deep anguish written on her features, and the contrast of those features with the expression they so lately wore, when she was the charm of every eye, affected him more than he was able to bear; and he began to think that however necessary for her future happiness might be the trials to which he had subjected her, yet that he should never be able to continue

He had frequently said, in contemplating his child as the wife of Donald Mackenzie, "I would rather follow her to the grave, than see her subjected to that imperious and passionate temper—that ungrateful and selfish disposition!" but he found, in this moment of awakened fear, it was more easily said than suffered, and that he was utterly unable to endure such an alternative.

In the midst of these meditations, while the afflicted father was silently lifting up his heart to the great Giver of light for instruction in the path of that duty which now appeared to him bewildering and perplexed, Louisa, starting, awoke, and hastily cried—"Where am I? who is there? am I lost? oh dear!"

"My love! my Louisa!" said the mother, close to her.

"My sweet girl!" said the father, hastening to the bedside.

Louisa, putting her arm round her mother's neck, gently raised herself; and holding out her hand towards her father,

he took it, and pressing it between his own, kissed it: the action seemed to distress her; she could not see him, partly from the curtain interposing, and partly from her confusion, and the deep sealing of the eyes, in forced slumbers; she exclaimed anxiously—"Who is this? oh dear! who is it?"

"Your father, my love! your own father!"

Drawing him close to her, she sobbed out convulsively—"I have them both; oh God, I thank thee! both, *both* parents!"

The baronet wept.

"Mother—it *is* my father—you said it was."

Lady Mowbray, unable to speak, gently disengaged herself, and drawing aside the curtain, threw a full light on the bed, while the baronet kissed her cheek, and, as he was wont in happier hours, gently pinched her ear.

"Oh my father, my *own* father! Tyrant! oh no—no, no—fie! fie! Tyrant indeed!"

It appeared to sir Francis either that his

daughter was suffering under a slight degree of delirium, or that she had been, for some time, indulging in severe thoughts against him, which were beginning to disperse; in either case, he judged it prudent, as well as kind, to sooth her into peace, rather than argue her into quiescence; tenderly renewing his caresses, he besought her to be tranquil, and to look forward with hope to the time which would not fail to restore her to cheerfulness and happiness.

" But *others* will suffer; I cannot bestow happiness!" said Louisa sighing.

" Yes, you will bestow on your mother and me, nor will *others* be so wretched as you fear, Louisa; a strong mind and an active life never fail to conquer hopeless predilections."

" Strong mind! active life!" repeated Louisa.

" Yes, my love, especially when that activity is honourably directed and fortu-

nately exerted, and when the parties are distinguished by those personal advantages which command admiration and illicit regard."

"Is this the tyrant?" said Louisa; but she spoke it internally, and gently closing her eyes, she appeared willing to sink again into slumber; but as sir Francis looked more narrowly, he perceived large silent drops coursing each other down her cheeks.

Deeply affected with the sight, he withdrew; and lady Mowbray, who had, with wonderful fortitude, enured herself, of late, to endure this species of suffering, remained to watch every movement of her daughter's heart, and administer the only lenitives in her power to bestow, in the moment when she appeared best able to digest them.

After some time, Louisa, looking timidly round the room, perceived only her mother: closing her eyes, as afraid of calling up a blush into that mother's cheek, she

at length said—"Pray did you—did you—I mean how did you marry Henry's father, my dear mother?"

"I married him, my love, from the house of worthy clergyman who had been my principal comfort during the illness and death of my father; we were married by bans; for I was younger than you, by some months."

"Then you did not elope with him, mother?"

"Very nearly, I confess, my dear; my life was rendered an insupportable burden—I had no hope, and, as I believed, no friend in the wide world; and if such an act of desperation admits of excuse, I was excusable."

"He was kind to you, mother—he loved you, I mean?"

"Indeed, my dear, he did, and I had a right to expect he would, for I had frequently seen his temper completely tried, by the ill-humour and vulgarity in my uncle's house; I knew his principles and

conduct to be upright, from my uncle's character of him, and he proved himself truly disinterested, from his choice of me, for I was portionless; and Miss Chester, a handsome young woman, with a fine fortune, was evidently partial to him."

Louisa lay musing a long time; lady Mowbray, hoping she would sleep, and solicitous to see her husband, and console or amuse him, was gently moving towards the door, when she was prevented by the voice of her daughter, crying hastily—"Don't leave me, mother; I am not fit to be left again: never, never leave me!"

"I wish to see sir Francis; he was so much affected, that I am unhappy about him."

"Oh bring him here, dear mother; at least tell him, will you—say to him that

"What shall I say, my love?"

"That I believe he is—*right*; you understand me?"

"My dear, good, generous, noble child!"

cried lady Mowbray, turning quick, and catching her daughter to her bosom, as their tears flowed freely together.

"No, no—none of these," sobbed out Louisa; "tell him I have been his naughty girl, (she tried to smile,) but still I am *his*, and I will be *his* own Louisa, if he can still pardon for being sometimes thoughtful, and ever unable to speak of times, and places, and things that are past. Oh my mother! this once let me weep on your bosom, and remember some things were, that were most dear to me."

"Ever, *ever*, my child, are your mother's arms open to you—her heart alive to your sorrows! but thank you—thank you, my precious child, for this confidence—for these efforts to relieve us all—to preserve to me the love of your father, and in restoring his happiness, giving me back my own."

After some time, Louisa grew more composed; but reiterated agitation had rendered her so weak, that lady Mowbray dared not bring her father to her that

night, either to praise her exertion, or assure himself that she was capable of making it; but the communication she made restored sleep to his pillow; and after wishing him a good-night, she returned to share that of the child of their equal cares.

Louisa was much indisposed the following day; but when her father visited her, the manner in which she held out her arms assured him that he was forgiven, and that she, on her part, sought forgiveness also; a kind of luxuriant sorrow, too sacred for examination—a kind of half-recovered confidence, too fragile for use, seemed to exist between them; but the affection which each felt was strong and mature: each looked towards lady Mowbray, as if they said, this is our bond with each other—this is our altar on which to offer vows of reconciliation—here can each repose those wishes and those feelings which necessity prevents us from exposing to each other.

Sir Francis and his lady had repeatedly lamented to each other that Louisa had never distinguished any young female by

a peculiar friendship, except Emma Sefton, for whom they had likewise a sincere regard, but who, from particular circumstances, was the last person to whom they wished to expose the present state of Louisa's mind; they however flattered themselves that she might, in a short time, visit them to advantage; for that, as Louisa might, now she had once broke the ice, speak freely to her mother when she was particularly affected by the memory of Donald, so, at other times, she might be amused and even instructed by Emma, who was near two years older than herself, had lived much in the world, under the care of her mother's aunt, a sensible and good woman, and was naturally a clever, affectionate, engaging girl.

The day following, sir Francis went to town, and invited his sister to visit them, informing her, as far as it was necessary, of what had been passing in his family; he had the satisfaction of finding, by a short letter from Henry, that, from the situation of the army, he was still at a dis-

tance from the object of his love; and he trusted circumstances might hold him in his situation until the arrival of Edward Sefton, who had sailed now nearly a month. The baronet, after reading this letter, waited on lady Welbrooke, whose lord was still in Bath, and whom he now ventured to invite to Twickenham; but she was too much indisposed to pay a country visit; she however agreed to send Emma and Adelaide, whenever her aunt could spare the former, and promised to forward the first letter she could receive from her son, to the baronet.

Sir Francis perceived, with much concern, that the health of this lady was still extremely delicate, and that, whenever she spoke of her son, it was with that lively emotion—that trepidation of affection, which proved how much fear and anxiety might, at this moment, be the cause of her suffering: he expressed this apprehension, to which she replied, with more of frankness and true cordiality than she had ever shewn before—" It would be folly

for me to affect, sir Francis, that I do not feel the fears natural to me, as a woman and a mother; but be assured, I have a sincere satisfaction in knowing my son is capable of an act of friendship which may be termed the heroism of attachment, and which must necessarily endear him to every branch of a family to which he has long tenderly and fervently devoted himself; besides, Edward has not hitherto had that opportunity of seeing the world every man in his rank of life ought to have, and even this short absence will, to a young man of his penetration, be useful and improving. I wish him to be as much a valuable member of society in general, as I find him to be estimable and desirable in my own family—what he is to me and my daughters, I have not the power to tell you."

A tear of pure maternal love, and even of respect, stole into lady Welbrooke's eye as she spoke; and sir Francis silently thanked God for this confirmation of the propriety of his conduct, and took his leave of lady Welbrooke with increased senti-

ments of respect, both for herself and her son.

The following morning, Louisa came down stairs; on entering the breakfast-parlour, she received a sensible shock, from the belief that she should see Donald no more: she recalled his conversation, and trembled with the idea that she had been the source of suffering to him; yet neither his assertions nor her own judgment, warped as it was by her passion for him, could enable her to see that she had been the cause of injuring him in his situation, since common sense asserted that he was certainly more in the place where all who loved him would wish to see him, than in driving cattle on the Scottish mountains, an exile from all the arts that embellish life, and nearly from all the society that render it desirable; nor could she help recollecting, that the very reason why Donald had decried his uncle's conduct as cruel and despotic, because he wished him not to go into the army, and that although he had sometimes decried a state of warfare

in general terms, he had yet manifested the greatest possible desire to engage in the service where he was finally appointed; she was therefore obliged to believe that the violence of his temper made him overlook the truth, or that his love, amounting to phrenzy, lost sight of all common circumstances and recollections; and that, in the rapid expression of his feelings, he overwhelmed his own mind, as much as that of his hearer. Louisa, in fact, gave credit to both these motives; her understanding compelled her, in a certain degree, to receive the first, and both her self-love and her passion for him induced her to accept the last; but even believing it, she acknowledged that it was barely excusable, and not possible to be deemed justifiable by such a man as her father.

But what affected Louisa far more than any other circumstance, was the violent expression of Donald's rage against her father, and which had literally terrified her: she had never seen anger so expressed; for

although Henry was a passionate boy, and what is called a warm-tempered man, yet he never allowed himself to be so moved; and she could not help repeating to herself, that although the cause, perhaps, was greater, yet so likewise were the circumstances which should have abated his fury greater; for sir Francis was *her* father, and was *his* friend and benefactor; nor could she recollect, that although he had entreated her forgiveness, he had yet used one expression indicative of former regard and obligation to her father, nor even, in one instance, so spoken of his own generous uncle, that the occasion itself called for, and which was claimed of him the more, because he had so frequently spoken slightly of him formerly.

These things were very foreign to her ideas of excellence, yet who that loves cannot find a thousand excuses for the errors of the beloved? they did not flow so fast as formerly, but still she looked upon him with all the partiality with which imagination seconds choice; and could

not help feeling assured, that if her father had permitted their union, he would have become worthy of his regard; but yet so far as he now appeared, she was impelled to own that, in the few charges he had adduced against Donald, he was right.

One thing at least appeared certain, that whatever were his faults, she must ever love him; or that, if indeed it were true that time would destroy her passion, yet her heart would be for ever closed against another flame; and where does the woman exist who desires never to love again, who can calmly view the extinction of that passion which lighted up a new being in her soul, and by extending her faculties of enjoyment, gave her an enlarged sense of the capacities of her nature, and told her that she had a foretaste of that immortality where love is perfected? for if—

> "Some feelings are to mortals given,
> With less of earth in them than Heaven,"

surely it is the tender, exalted, and faith-

ful love of such a heart as poor Louisa's, which merit such praise.

Many a sleepless, anxious hour did she now pass, yet her heart was certainly lighter of a heavy load, from the terms on which she now stood with her parents; and in the consciousness of her doing her duty, with the utmost firmness in her power, she lost the oppressive sense she would otherwise have entertained of possessing a painful secret: on the contrary, she felt it the last act of kindness she could ever shew to Donald, of guarding his visit from the condemnation she thought it would not fail to meet with from her parents, and since her own weakness was but too well known to them, she tacitly suffered her illness to be placed to the general account. But although Louisa did not reveal this interview, from regard to Donald, yet she took no indirect methods of hiding it from the knowledge of her parents; still less would she have encroached on her own unpolluted veracity for such a purpose.

The arrival of lady Selthorpe gave pleasure to Louisa, when she could command her feelings; for there was an inexhaustible fund of amusement in her ladyship's conversation, when the heart could forego its busy broodings over the sorrow which it hugged in secret, as if it were a blessing.

Louisa often thought, that caressed as she was by her parents, and delighted as she ever was when, from time, she perceived them happy by her medium, that if she knew that Donald was easy, she might once more learn to be tranquil; but the idea of his sufferings—of the keener pangs which his impetuous spirit would feel, subdued her inmost heart—"Alas!" she would say, "he has no parent to sooth—no friend to excite his exertion! alone and unpitied, he will again cross the deep; uncheered and hopeless, his heart withered, his expectations mildewed, his energies destroyed! I have spread desolation on his path—I have overwhelmed him with misery; and shall I dare to be happy?

shall I presume to hope for peace? never, never !'

Thus woman reasons—and thus woman feels; but her fears are the offspring of her feelings; and would her reason examine what the lessons of experience suggest, she would see that man rarely pines in solitude, or wastes life in regrets thus useless. Born to contend with ills, rather than sustain them, he rushes from one passion to another; and either by a well-directed ambition, or a misguided pursuit, diverts the pang, and blunts the dart, which rankles in the breast, and lacerates the heart of woman.

Yet there is a charm in the idea of being beloved, that atones for all the ills of sympathy; and it has rarely occurred to any human being to say, with simplicity and sincerity—"I would he loved me less!" And whilst Louisa, in the stillness of night, wept over the pangs which her too-vivid imagination depicted Donald as suffering, yet she never for a moment accepted her

father's consolation that an active life, an honourable pursuit, would divert his sorrows; still less could she believe that another would ever succeed to her place in his heart—a heart so fondly, so madly devoted to her; and though she frequently repeated these words to herself, because her father's praise of Donald was sweet to her, and honourable to himself, her repetition only induced her eventually to contradict all that it asserted, and assure herself that Donald was, and ever would be, miserable.

CHAP. IV.

LADY Selthorpe, after rusticating three days in the beginning of March, was obliged, by indispensable engagements, with which her heart had no connection, to leave a circle with which it became every day more closely united. She had not once, during this time, adverted to the real cause of Louisa's indisposition; yet she had contrived not only to wean her from the contemplation of sorrow, but to strengthen her judgment, and greatly add to her knowledge of character. On kissing her, at parting, she whispered—" It is hard to struggle against either love or hatred, Louisa; but take courage; both may be done; happy is she who, by conquering the first, saves herself from temptation to the second."

Louisa, with equal sorrow and surprise, was about to reply, but her ladyship's look,

of mysterious confidence, forbade all comment; she sprung into her carriage, and was out of sight before Louisa recovered what might be called her consternation.

Sir Francis, aware of the loss they should sustain in his sister's society, roused Louisa from the reverie into which she was plunged, by saying—"Come, my love, let me once more have the pleasure of seeing you mounted; I have at length pleased myself in the purchase of a new pad for you, and I want you to try my present."

Louisa looked up, and beheld Watkins holding a beautiful horse, with a new side-saddle, at the door.

"I thought we would have every thing complete," said the baronet, marking the direction of her eye.

Louisa comprehended the full extent of her father's care; she was aware that he had purchased every thing new, that no circumstance might painfully remind her of the loss of her favourite Fanny; but the remembrance would intrude, and with it a train of other thoughts, which did, in-

deed, effectually banish even the viscountess.

Louisa had, from infancy, been accustomed to thank her father for every present he made her by a kiss; more affected with this than she had ever been before, she gazed at it, then suddenly turning, she threw her arms round her father, and dropt her head upon his shoulder.

The baronet kissed her cheek, which was moistened by a tear; always dreading the indulgence of her sensibility, he said, as cheerfully as he could—" Come, my dear, get on your habit, and——"

Louisa unclasped her arms—" Surely, my dear father, you are thinner—much thinner, than you were when I——"

She stepped back—she looked earnestly at him; his clothes hung loose, his ruddy face was pale, his handsome features contracted, even his hair seemed whiter, and years seemed added to him.

" Good God! my dear father! you are ill—very ill; and you have told none of us!"

"Indeed I am not, my love; on the contrary, I am daily recovering myself."

"Recovering! then you have been ill? what a change there is in you! how could I not see it? Oh dear! it is very strange!"

The baronet took his daughter's hand, and led her into the house.

"My dear Louisa must surely have been aware how much both her mother and myself have been suffering, for a long time, partly from apprehension, and partly from that which we deemed real misfortune; you knew, my child, that in all your affliction we were afflicted; and at my time of life, Louisa——"

The baronet stopped, and his daughter looked in his face with an agonizing gaze of inquiry.

"At my time of life, my love, sorrow makes quick ravages in the health; but I am now better; I look to you for restoration, and you will not fail me, my child?"

Louisa dropt upon her knees, her hands were upraised to Heaven; she seemed

struggling to speak, but all articulation was denied her.

"Do not distress yourself thus, my love; I read the promise of your heart. I know you will do your best to regain your own spirits, and in doing that, will restore comfort to *us*; and be assured, the time will come when you will be convinced that I was never unkind to you, even for a moment."

The baronet, unable to control his own emotions, and fearful of awakening hers still more acutely, suddenly withdrew; and Louisa was found, by her mother, still kneeling, and absorbed in sad recollections, and still sadder forebodings.

Suddenly she arose; she looked earnestly at her mother, who looked pale and thin also, though calm and complacent, and who understood so well the language of her daughter's looks, that ere she spoke, she began to comfort her, and by pointing out exertion as the only possible way to benefit both herself and her parents, at length

induced her to calm her mind, and obtain self-command enough to put on her habit, and obey her father's wishes, promising to seek and sooth the baronet herself.

Watkins had held Louisa's horse a long time; but he was not sorry to believe that Miss Mowbray was fretting because she had found out that his master was ill; it was a point on which he had held daily discussions, for a long time, but very little either to the satisfaction of his hearers or himself; for sir Francis's servants all regarded him with love so ardent, that it was only tempered by respect into the quiet reverence necessary to produce acceptable service.

After Louisa had proceeded about fifty yards, she found that the saddle was not perfectly easy to the horse.

" I must trouble you, Watkins," said she, " to examine the girths; I doubt this saddle is painful to the horse."

Watkins instantly dismounted, and obeyed in silence; he was accustomed to be very loquacious; though remarkably han-

dy, he was now evidently awkward and embarrassed.

"Shall I dismount, Watkins?" said Louisa, with that kind tone which was meant to console him for his blundering.

"N—n—n—no, thankye, Miss Mowbray, I shall manage it presently," cried Watkins, sobbing.

"For Heaven's sake, what is the matter, Watkins? are you ill? has any thing happened? What a morning is this!"

"Aye, Miss, it is a morning, sitch as I an't seen for six months an three weeks; but I beg pardon; I don't wish to put ye in a flusteration."

"I don't understand you," said Louisa, struggling for composure; "but I am sorry to see you so affected."

"Well then, I hopes you forgive me, though God knows, I be as innocent as the child that's unborn; yet ever since poor Fanny were killed, you ha never spoke a word, good or bad, Miss Mowbray, to John Watkins, 'till this blessed day; an

somehow, the death o' that poor beast were a sign o' bad luck to us all; for master ha never been himself since then. Sometimes he wer a little cross and frumpish loike, sometimes he were flat and uneasy, as it were, and the butler said he were off his feed sadly; and now, latterly, his flesh ha fallen away, an he be gone to nothing, considering what a fine portly gentleman he were, when we went into them terrible no-nation places, last summer."

Louisa sighed, and unequal to encountering remarks that harrowed up her feelings, in various ways of self-reproach, she said—"I think, Watkins, it will do; the horse seems easy now."

"For that matter, I dare say it will; this be a good strong fellow, not like poor Fanny; she wer a good creature, but always narvous, like a woman. I ha wondered, many's the time, how you could ever bear the sight of that long-legged, (I beg pardon), that new captain, as killed her; how many a time did you try over

the ould cat, when she wer buried i' th' garden! and allis, from a little one, wer so tender-hearted, and used to beg master Henry to stay at home when he wer going a-shooting; aye, you suffered many a secret hour about poor Fanny, I don't doubt; an I said to myself, that's the reason she looks shy like at me; but still I felt it hard, Miss, indeed I did, for I did my full duty to the poor creature, that I did; an it's my comfort to know she were sensible to th' last; an when I gave her th' last mash as ever she swallowed, she knoed me, Miss Mowbray, aye, as well as she used to know you, when you fed her with slices of bread at the park-gate."

Louisa well remembered the affection of her favourite; and she replied, with great difficulty—" I am sure you would do your duty, Watkins."

" Duty! aye sure, it's every body's duty to use dumb creatures properly; that was what Mr. Sefton said, only genteeler like, an quite mild, though pretty firm too, as much as to say, though I doesn't desire to

quarrel, yet I ben't afeard of you; but whew—away goes he, gallop, gallop, up hill an down: thinks I to myself, set a beggar on horseback, he'll ride to the devil! I beg pardon, for it seems he is a gemman, after all, and will be a lord sometime; the Lord above help his servants, say I, when that time comes."

Louisa pricked her horse into a canter; and poor Watkins, who was thus atoning to himself for the long silence imposed upon him, by her altered manners, was obliged to follow; the ride was not long, for even the beauty of opening vegetation, and the novelty of the scene, could not prevent the perpetual whispers of that still, small voice which called her to solitude and self-examination; and as soon as she had fulfilled a duty, by taking the exercise prescribed to her, she became anxious to witness the effect of it upon her parents—she longed to claim her reward in their approbation.

On dismounting, Louisa took her purse,

and opening it, said—"I have never given you any thing for your care of my poor Fanny, Watkins; I beg you——"

"No—no, thank you, Miss, I want no money; I beg pardon for speaking so free; but you know, Miss, the first time ever you sat on a horse, the little Shetland, you know, why, there *I* held you, while the captain, (as is now, God bless him!) led it, and sadly afeard you were; but we got on by little and little; but when the poney were tried, why then, dear heart, you wer all of a tremble again; an I said, says I, don't try it no longer, Miss, if so be as you can't, for I could not bear to see you suffer; and you said, says you, 'yes, John, I will conquer myself, and learn to ride, because my papa wishes me to learn very much,' and so you did: an I tould my mother, (she was alive then, poor soul), I told her that, please God to rear you, you'd be the blessing o' the barrownight's old age; I saw you would; an I axed her to come to th' lane end, to look at you, how

pretty you was with your little nankeen jacket and straw hat, for all the world like an angel on horseback."

Louisa gave a sigh to the memory of her own virtuous efforts as a child, and a smile to Watkins's description of her infantine beauty; she insisted on his accepting a couple of guineas for past services, but her heart told her it was, in fact, for present instruction. She felt herself, at this moment, under high, though very painful obligation to Watkins; he had torn, with a coarse, but efficient grasp, that veil from her eyes, with which she had been used to scan every action of Donald's; and she saw clearly, that in justifying his faults, she had been led to partake them; every feeling of her heart, every peculiarity of her manners, at the time they had spoken of, rose to her view; and so far from deeming her parents cruel and inconsiderate towards either Donald or herself, she felt surprised at their long forbearance, and especially that her father should have persisted in benefiting one

whose conduct was, in many respects, so diametrically opposite to that which he had inculcated in her brother, and expected from him. Yet although this view naturally inclined her more towards her parents, and enabled to justify their conduct towards her, yet it was not therefore possible for her to dismiss the object of her mingled blame and idolatry from her heart. He no longer "reigned and ruled without control," but he still held his throne in her bosom; her heart turned with less of habitual admiration, but still as the object of tenderness and regret—as one who mourned for her, and claimed her gratitude, and to whom she could willingly have devoted herself, even in poverty and reproach, had she been permitted to suffer alone.

CHAP. V.

A DAY or two after Louisa had been thus led to consider the situation of her parents, and exert herself for their sakes, she had the pleasure of finding further relief by the arrival of Emma Sefton, who would have been at an earlier time burthensome to her spirits, but who now assisted in dispelling her melancholy, and forcing her into that exertion necessary for restoring her habits and avocations.

During the whole of the first day, lady Mowbray exerted herself in the most extraordinary manner to find conversation for them all. On parting for the night, Louisa observed that she was quite exhausted, and affectionately blamed her for overdoing herself.

"I was in continual dread lest Miss Sefton should, in giving us the news of the

day, or speaking of any parties she may have visited lately, be led to mention names or circumstances you were not able to bear. She is a sensible, high-spirited girl, who, under similar circumstances, would die rather than court pity; and from such a one you would not wish to seek sympathy, since you could not derive consolation; I therefore think it better for her to remain a stranger to the whole affair.

"Undoubtedly; I would not have any human being know my weakness. I love Emma very much; but she is not like my mother to me."

"Then, my dear girl, you must so far collect yourself, as not to betray the interest you take in a person every way attracting observation."

Louisa promised to be guarded; and in consequence, she became under the most painful state of alarm, every moment expecting and fearing she knew not what of terrible trial. She however endured it better than could have been expected when

it did arrive, as she happened to be sitting with her back to Emma, who was at the instrument, looking over some music.

"These are all Scotch airs; you seem partial to them: I never sing 'em; but Adelaide does, I find."

Anxious to get rid of the songs, Louisa answered—"I was fully in hopes that your sister would have accompanied you; in fact, I thought her the more likely to come of the two, because Mrs. Danvers has only one companion, but lady Welbrooke has two."

"True; and I believe my mother would have spared her, but Adelaide made excuses about cold in the country, and such nonsense; I knew what was at the bottom; the coldness was towards you; 'twas felt more in her own bosom than in the breezes of Twickenham."

"Indeed! you surprise and grieve me."

"Oh no, that is impossible; you must be aware that Adelaide couldn't readily forgive you for flirting with, or at least being

distinguished by, her beau at lady Selthorpe's ball."

A torrent of blushes covered Louisa even to her fingers; they were unseen; and Emma not requiring an answer, nor aware of the pain she inflicted, continued—"It was so provoking too, when the man came in all covered with gold lace and glory, when all the women were smirking, and the men extolling him, and when he certainly looked as outrageously handsome as Achilles himself could have done, and evidently thought that Achilles and Paris were both fools to him. At such a moment as that, consider what would have been the triumph to Adelaide, if, at her first ball, she had carried away the prize; but it was your first ball, too; and as I told her, 'twas all right and proper that he should pay his respects to the queen of the night; your claims were decisive—you were lady Selthorpe's niece, and his first patron's daughter, for I understood your father picked him up in a very so-so plight; in fact, he

told my mother so; and but for sir Francis, the earl of Callander would not have received him, for I am told his high mightiness is subject to tantrums, and had called the old bachelor, who is a dear, good soul, some very unpretty names; so I said, take it altogether, 'twas his duty to dance with you."

Gasping for breath, Louisa at length said —"I didn't know—that is, I had forgot that your sister was acquainted with——"

"Oh, they became prodigiously intimate, as far as I can learn, during the time you went down to visit and bury poor general Deverell; not but my mother or Edward were of course always of the party; the fact is, country Misses who have lived in retirement are full of fancies, and think if ever a young man happens to sigh, or utter a sentiment, he must be in love with them; so I suppose this northern hero 'so sighed and looked,' until Adelaide concluded he was in love with her."

"I suppose so," said Louisa, indifferently.

"And yet," retorted Emma, who could not bear to think Adelaide despised, "my sister is too lively a girl, and has too much penetration, to be as subject as many are to this species of self-deception. The truth probably was, that Mackenzie was not happy; how should he?—But his uneasiness was not love;—but that is the only cause any young lady ever chuses to assign for a handsome man's uneasiness. He saw she sympathized, and he had not the honesty to undeceive her; he was flattered by the interest he had excited in a pretty girl, who was of rank enough to give some *eclat* to her prepossession, and forgot that, in allowing her error, he laid the foundation of sorrow to her, and injured the peace of a family where he was hospitably received, and much regarded."

"But how could he help it? If he did not confess a passion, which I am *sure* he did not, I don't see how *he* was to blame."

"How you can be so *sure*, I can't tell; but allowing that he did not make love in words to Adelaide, still he was to blame.

She is very artless, you know; he saw the state of her feelings—he was aware that she was deceiving herself—aware, too, that he was *then* in no situation to make her an offer; if he loved her, I grant he might be blind to all this; but if he did *not*, there can be no possible excuse for him; and I am fully persuaded he had no passion for Adelaide."

"So am I."

"And yet had you seen the attention he paid her at the opera the other night, you would have thought there was something between them, I'm certain."

"What other night?"

"Let me see, 'twas the Wednesday after you came to Twickenham; he came late into lord Callander's box, who had assembled us all to see the new ballet. Sir Bennet Lawson was of the party, and seemed not a little pleased with Adelaide; and that pleased me, so that I was not over and above glad to see the new star step in, and by his refulgence make all others 'hide their diminished heads;' nor do I know at

this moment whether it was really his liking for Adelaide, or his wish to rival sir Bennet, which caused his attention to her; I doubt there was more of vanity than love in it."

Louisa rose to leave the room; but finding herself incapable of moving, sunk down on her seat.

"He looked very ill that night," continued Emma, "as if he had been fretting; much more interesting, as the phrase is, than when he stalks about like Jack the Giant-killer."

At this moment the baronet entered, and Louisa, relieved by hearing that Donald had really looked ill on that eventful night when she had suffered so severely, was again going out; but on her father saying to Emma, "Who are you caricaturing by such a name as that, young lady?" she gave him a proof of her resolution, by awaiting the answer—"Not caricaturing, my dear sir Francis, only characterizing."

"*I* must judge of that, you know."

"I was speaking, sir, of one, 'who doth

bestride the narrow world like a Colossus,' the observed of all observers, captain, or probably ere now, sir Donald Mackenzie."

Sir Francis almost trembled for his daughter; but he hastily relieved her, by saying —"Ah, ah, Miss Emma, I have found you out; the captain is fortunate more ways than one, it seems, for we all know what abuse from young ladies means on such occasions as these."

"I'll allow you to joke; but the fact is, that I don't much like this paragon, for reasons I have given Louisa; perhaps, too, his amazing good fortune galls me. Here comes a man from the Hebrides, or the moon, steps across the sea, wind and tide waiting his nod, kills a handful of Frenchmen, gets introduced to his general, who, being his countryman, sends him home with a flaming recommendation, heaps honours on his head, and sets all the world a-gaping at him, whilst many a one as brave as he, and possessing perhaps ten times his stock of really bosom-bred useful virtues, are toiling through the heat of the day,

wounded, harassed, and still fighting, who may never meet distinction, may even meet only an unnoticed, though not unlamented, grave."

Emma stopped; she could not contemplate the image she had awakened; her eyes were full of tears.

"This is all very true," said the baronet; "but surely it is nevertheless a pleasant thing to see a fine handsome young man seize laurels with a rapidity that honours his country, and stimulates its exertion."

"I know people quite as handsome as him, sir Francis; I am sure there is a Mackenzie that *you* know, who is at least *his* equal, except in his inches, as the boxers say, and who in other respects——"

At this moment Emma threw down a large chest of music-books, and the subject dropt with them. Louisa thought and rethought on all that had passed; and although she by no means believed that Donald had paid attentions to Adelaide of the nature imputed to him, and even saw that what Emma called sentimentalizing with

her sister, might have arisen from the passion he felt for *her*, and his anxiety as to its issue; yet she became most painfully aware that she had felt their unfortunate attachment far more deeply than himself, since she knew that it would have been utterly impossible for her, under any circumstances, so to have overcome the shock of parting, as to have entered into company at all, whereas he had sought amusement in a way which forced him to dress, to smile, to attend on one who could not fail to awaken the memory of scenes in which *she* had bore a part; and she knew Donald's temper too well to believe that this exertion was made to oblige his uncle, although it was probably very acceptable to him.

In proportion as either conversation or occupation drew the mind of Louisa from resting exclusively on one idea, so she regained her powers and her peace, and was enabled to look back with a degree of surprise to the complete estrangement from all the feelings and pursuits of her

former life, which she had owned during the period in which she was subjugated to this overwhelming passion; but yet there was little zest in amusement, little enjoyment in occupation; books, music, and drawing, had lost their power of awakening ideas, or conferring delight; her heart and her mind no longer seemed united in pursuit. Passion is a stimulant which leaves the heart listless, and incapable of lesser satisfactions; and when Louisa ceased to weep and tremble for the health of her parents, and to keep alive the feverish action of her aching bosom by the emotion they excited, a terrible torpor seemed to steal over her faculties, and benumb at once her virtues and her enjoyments.

As this state of mind advanced, her ever-watchful parents diverted its effects, by rousing her to deeds of active benevolence, and especially by awakening her fears, and rekindling her love for Henry. In this management of her affections, this medicining of the mind, they happily succeeded. To a person educated and disposed as

Louisa was, such an exertion of benevolent and kindred duties was infinitely more serviceable than any mixture with gay society, or even elevated mind, could possibly have been.

In the house of sorrow, in the abode of want, Louisa could not only find, the proper employ of her sensibility, the consciousness of her own usefulness, which is of all others the sense which most reconciles the mind to life, and even suffering, but she renewed in these scenes the sense of her dependence on the will of Heaven, and the duty of resignation to the will of that heavenly Father, whom she believed had appointed her earthly parent as his delegate. She drank anew, from the fountain of divine inspiration, those doctrines which tended to fill her soul with exalted piety, and the sublime enthusiasm which enables us to practise the deepest submission, and leads us to the sincerest humility, yet elevates our views, and exalts our nature, while it gives purity and stability to our happiness.

Whilst Louisa is thus attaining excellence of character, and learning to merit comfort, we will look after those wanderers whose fate we trust is of some importance to our readers, and whom a still nearer interest has kept us from inquiring after, further than the bare mention of Henry's last letter, which was merely filled with public business.

CHAP. VI.

EDWARD saw the last vestiges of his native shore recede from his eye with that painful emotion so natural to one who leaves behind the dearest treasures of the heart. He endeavoured to retain, as it were, the sense of sir Francis's last pressure of the hand, to impress upon his memory, in its strongest, finest traits, the smile, the words of Louisa; but, alas! with her was conjured up the remembrance of Mackenzie's unexpected and honourable return, as if to check the exultation her words had awakened; and even with the fatherly adieus of sir Francis was blended his mother's tearful permission to depart, the evils she might experience during his absence, and the bitter recollections of his father's errors and vices, brought up the melancholy rear of his contemplations.

The third day they were out at sea, a

French frigate was perceived, which occasioned some alarm among the passengers, and was naturally a cause of much vexation to Edward, who justly feared that all the end he had proposed from his voyage would be defeated, his own hopes blasted, and perhaps the flower of his days be consumed in a French prison. These melancholy forebodings were quickly dispersed by the universal spirit, valour, and activity displayed by the little crew of the packet, who seemed to experience as great desire for fighting, as, when hungry, they did for the mess hour. Much as Edward had heard of the bravery of our gallant tars, it yet was far exceeded by the truth, and he soon caught such a portion of their fire as to render him perfectly free from all fear of consequences, and even eager to engage.

In the course of a short time all fears of captivity were at an end; the frigate was fairly beaten off, and the crew of the packet lamenting bitterly that they could do no more; but as that was impossible against a vessel triple their size, they gave a loud

cheer, and held on their course rejoicing, not having lost a single hand, though many were badly wounded, and Edward himself had not escaped injury, a ball having grazed the calf of his leg, and his right hand being bruised.

On landing at Corunna, after a speedy passage, it was his object, as soon as possible, to reach the British army, of which the nearest division now lay near Badajos. He was struck with the amazing difference of all around him, as it regarded vegetation; he had left winter behind him, reigning in all its horrors; a genial spring surrounded him, a mild atmosphere refreshed him. Plants and flowers already assumed their vernal beauties, and a generous soil seemed willing to bestow more than the proud and idle beings who trod upon her would stoop to gather. Uncultivated lands, half-built, inelegant streets, wretched houses, rendered more deplorable from the total want of internal order, bespoke a total apathy or a miserable poverty in all the lower orders of the people, together with a supineness,

a contentedness of ignorance and wretchedness, which forbade the hope of improvement; and Edward, on contrasting the moral state of Spain with his own, could not forbear exclaiming—

"Man is the fruit our gelid climes supply,
And souls are ripen'd 'neath our northern sky."

Edward had soon reason to wish that he had landed at Lisbon, where at least he would have met with numbers of his countrymen, who would have facilitated his journey; but he was now left in the most uncomfortable situation imaginable, in a country which of all others affords the fewest facilities for escaping its own disagreeables, and scarcely could he persuade himself that this was once the land of chivalry. The farther he advanced into the interior, the more his difficulties increased; though a good linguist, he was not sufficiently master of the Spanish to make himself understood, and he did not find himself so much estimated as an Englishman, as he felt that he had a right to expect

whilst if he ventured to speak French, he became the subject of decided detestation. In passing through towns, he seldom learnt the real route of the armies, and he was in perpetual fear lest he should be taken prisoner by some foraging party of the enemy; yet when left to the uncertain guidance of the muleteers, over the wide, and often trackless plains, he was still more hopeless of his destination, and was often tempted to think that his whole expedition was as wretched and fruitless as those of the knight of La Mancha, and that he deserved to be laughed at for conduct which might be termed the Quixotism of friendship. But when at length he really found himself in the British camp, when the eager cry of joy had hailed and welcomed him from the voice of Henry, he was convinced that he had done only right, and that his friends' future welfare were worth a thousand journeys such as this had been, with all its difficulties.

The entire novelty of the scene, in thus

finding himself surrounded by an English world in a strange country, the curious contrast between the old manners and the new customs of those around, the grafting of manners upon habits, and the sight of two naturally unbending nations, distinct in all their common pursuits, religion, and feelings, obliged to coalesce, conform, and agree in most points, presented frequently a ludicrous spectacle and situation, and furnished incessant subjects of observation and reflection. Edward saw all, considered all around him; as a young man he laughed, as a philosopher he reasoned, as a Briton he rejoiced in the superiority of his own countrymen; as a human being he lamented over a people not less insulted by an enemy than degraded by themselves.

It was not possible, during the first day, for the friends to find a single moment to themselves, so much was Edward surrounded, and Henry was on duty nearly all the night. The first moment he could, however, find his friend alone, he said, with an eager, and somewhat deprecating air—

"You said repeatedly yesterday, Edward, that you were not come to join the army, that your business was private; for God's sake tell me what it is!"

"First answer *me*. Are you married?"

"No. How the devil could I be married? I have only seen Antonia once since I wrote to you."

"So much the better; I hope you are not engaged?"

"I hope I *am*; I expect to hear from her every day, and trust her letter will relieve me from the suspense under which I suffer."

"I trust your suspense will be ended soon, for it is a dreadful state, but not in the way you wish. I am come all this way, Henry, to prevent your marriage."

"There are some cases, Mr. Sefton, in which a man will judge for himself, and I apprehend marriage is one of them."

Edward was hurt; but he remembered that Henry was in love, and that he was warm in all his attachments, and likely to be not slightly captivated by one whose at-

tractions had been so highly spoken of, even by those who condemned her. He did not reply, and Henry continued—

"I am older than you; though a soldier, I have mixed more in society, and at any rate, I am a judge of what I like in a woman myself. It appears to me incomprehensible that you should——"

"It would indeed be *incomprehensible* that I should push myself into a business of all others the most delicate, the most thankless, and often the most hopeless, if I had not reasons, of which your heart, I had hoped, Henry—captain Deverell, I mean, might have enabled you to judge."

"May I ask if sir Francis Mowbray knows of this step?"

"I came to save him from the trouble. He said that he owed you his life, and he would hazard his own to do you service."

"Good God grant me patience! What is the meaning of all this? Why are lives, invaluable lives, to be risked, seas traversed, and dangers braved, to render me miserable, to snatch from my arms a woman I

adore, in the very moment when I had hoped to secure her? Have you learnt any thing really bad of Antonia? Speak, or I shall run mad! Is Antonia a wanton? has she lost her honour in England?"

"Certainly not."

"Then your cares are fruitless; nothing less could part us. I thank you for this relief."

Excessively affected, Henry sat down for a few moments, then rising in renewed agitation, he cried—"I do not see what else could possibly induce you to take such a wonderful step as this, to stop my marriage."

"Excuse me; had Antonia decidedly lost her reputation, a single line from sir Francis must have concluded the affair at once; but in a case where there appeared to your mother and him reason to believe your marriage must be attended with much misery, yet no reason sufficiently strong to prevent your weighing them against the blandishments of a beautiful and highly-gifted woman, it became a serious and dif-

ficult task to wean or to tear a heart like yours from its bondage. It was thought to require the address of a friend, the authority of a parent, and I was deputed to act for both. I may have outweighed my own powers, but certainly not more than you have underrated my motives. I did not leave my country and my mother to play the part of a busy-body, much less to inflict pain on one I have so long, so fervently loved."

Edward arose, and strode with long perturbed steps out of the tent, leaving Henry in a confusion of feeling, a whirl of passion, in which he knew not whether most to hate himself or the rest of the world. A thousand times he wished he had never beheld Edward, and the next he loathed himself for not thanking him almost upon his knees for such unprecedented goodness; but to resign Antonia was altogether impossible.

As if to add to the severity of his struggle, on this very morning he received a short, but long-expected letter from An-

tonia, informing him, in as brief a manner as possible, that she wished to see him, and had little doubt but the interview would produce all the happiness he wished.

This was conclusive. If Edward had not arrived, this very hour he would have obtained leave of absence, and ere night have been at her feet. It was a trial no human patience could endure; not a moment before he was following Edward to apologize for his petulance, and entreat the return of a friendship which, however exerted, was invaluable to him; but he now spurned the idea; he had no friend, he could have no friend but the friends of Antonia.

He had no occasion to seek Edward for purposes of either love or anger; as soon as he had conquered the risings of indignation, he returned to his charge, determined to struggle alike with his friend and himself until he had completed the good work he sought to accomplish. The calmness of his countenance only increased the terrible irritation of poor Henry's feelings; he was unable to suppress or conceal them, and

Edward encouraged him to speak, by remarking that he had got a letter.

"I *have*; it is one of the last importance, an invitation from Antonia to visit her; she is at the village of Guiana, on the banks of the Guadalquivir, not forty miles from hence."

"You will not go, Deverell, without at least hearing what I have to say?"

"You are going to demand obedience to my mother, or rather to sir Francis Mowbray?"

"I am not. In speaking of this affair, the baronet said—'I am not his father, and if I were, he is past the age when a son deems it a duty to obey on the simple principle of obedience.'"

"To which, I suppose, he added—'Henry too is independent now, and will not submit to *me*?"

"So far from it, he said—'I cannot demand Henry's obedience, because he would pay it at any risk, now he has gained a fortune, lest I should mistake him; but that I shall never do, nor shall I ever cease to

love him, and for that very reason it is that I cannot bear him to marry one whom I never can think worthy of him."

"Oh what a man that is! never, never was there such a man as sir Francis!"

"Very few indeed," said Edward, with a sigh. "I can depend upon his judgment —I gave his letter due consideration; but he does not know Antonia, you know it was impossible for him to judge of her extraordinary excellencies. Heaven is my witness, I would obey his wishes if I could, but I am convinced that in doing it, I should be as unjust to her excellence, as destructive of my own happiness."

Henry was very thoughtful.

"You appeared yourself apprehensive that she was coquettish?"

"I did. There is something of infection in the very air of this country; I was suspicious that she listened to another officer, and that she was playing with don Jachima, her old lover; but I am convinced I was wrong. Were you to see her

sit at the feet of her uncle—were you to hear her sing her vespers to the Virgin, you would never forget her."

"I will do both; I will accompany you. I am not deputed to tear you from a woman worthy of you, but to convince myself that she *is* such, or you that she is *not* such."

"Oh, Edward! Edward! how could I dare to use you so ill? Can you—is it possible you can forgive me?"

"Aye! 'how 'scaped you killing when you used me thus?"

"How indeed! after such a voyage—such a journey, too—tearing yourself from the very arms of love and happiness—oh, d—n it, what a fool, what a wretch I am!"

"At present let us think only of our journey. What does Antonia say?"

Henry gave him the letter, which was written in English, and immediately went out to seek his general. Permission was given him for three days absence only, as preparations were now rapidly making for

opening the campaign; he ordered horses, or rather mules, directed the packing of his cloakbag, and returned to his friend.

"There is great coolness and brevity in this epistle; it savours more of a thinking, orderly Englishwoman, than the impassioned, enchanting, and enchanted daughter of the sun you described Antonia to e."

"Yet she is certainly all that in her manners; but the note you see proves that my suspicions were ill founded, that she is no coquette."

"Yet certainly the circumstance of her stepping into the garden at York, with her beads in her hand, making the very act of devotion the medium of attraction to a stranger, of whom she had no right to think well, thus offending the superior, and setting a bad example to others, is some excuse for your suspicion."

"But consider the nature of her faith, my dear fellow; she had nothing to do but confess, and all would be wiped off, you know."

"By the same rule she may confess and wipe off any thing; you ought not to place her faith in so contemptuous a point of view, Henry. If you think thus, how will you bear to hear your wife instruct your son in the rudiments of his faith—the foundation of his morality?"

"I didn't think of that exactly; in fact, I hope, that with so fine an understanding as she possesses, she will become a Protestant some time; at any rate, a woman had better have a faulty religion, than no religion at all. There is something in the open defiance of Christianity, which I have, in a few instances, met with in my own countrywomen, which is a thousand times more repugnant to my sense of right, and to my ideas of feminine virtue, than all the superstitions I see paid in this country to nuestro signora."

"You are perfectly right; I feel with you exactly; but surely a woman who is pious, sensible, and enlightened, such a woman as your mother and mine, are better calculated for the companions of youth

and age than those whom we are compelled to pity for weakness, even where it is amiable."

"A soldier does not reason so closely; a bustling life, full of dangers and hardships, cures us of these little fastidiousnesses you thinking men are subject to; we are content to snatch the happiness in our power, and provide only for the day before us."

"But you, Henry, will not always be a soldier; nor in marrying will you, I well know, with your principles, consider marriage a temporary or convenient connection; of course, your partner for life should be one you hope to make your partner for eternity."

"Assuredly!"

"And we trust that you will be able, honourably, to beat your spear into a pruning-hook; even in your best—nay, your very early days, you will sit down in the seat of your ancestors, a country gentleman, the sir Francis of the next generation; have you asked yourself how far Antonia will sustain the quiet character

and unassuming virtues we expect in an elegant but useful English gentlewoman?"

"You shall see—you shall see; for my part, I have no idea of any thing more delightful than the society of Antonia in the country; her whole heart devoted to the man of her choice—her talents, her imagination, opening every hour new sources of felicity for himself, and the circle her hospitality would draw around them—from her all wearisomeness and insipidity would fly, and life pass away like a quick march to the sound of martial music; instead of which, I am told, married people usually creep like the funeral anthem, or the dead march in Saul."

"You and I know those, Henry, who do neither; and I believe their walk is the happiest."

"Why, lookye, Edward, I would *rather* have Antonia a little tamer—a little more *à l'Anglois*, in fact, a little less charming, more like Louisa, who veils even her wit and her goodness; but I allow, for the country—for her extreme anxiety to please;

which has probably originally arisen from her dependence on her uncle, to which I may add, that as she is very young, I hope she will catch the modesty of the English-women, when she is settled amongst them.”

“And so become virtuous and retiring by infection. So well, if any body could make her such, she would have every chance at Sefton Park; but there, I think, she will never come; for there, you know, they are fastidious enough—*there* they have an idea that the wife of a British soldier, and an English lady of the manor, should be like the wife of a Cæsar, not only pure, but unsuspected.”

Henry, thoughtful and uneasy, changed the conversation; and after a[illegible]able journey, they arrived, in the middle of the night, at a miserable venta, at the village where Antonia resided, the one curious and anxious, the other restless and dissatisfied, though so near that object in which he repeatedly told himself all his hopes of future happiness existed, and whom, two days before this journey,

would have made the most enraptured of lovers, and probably of husbands.

From the miserable appearance of this village, and the contrast of every thing around, to the comforts, elegancies, and gaieties Antonia had doubtless participated in England, Edward could not help concluding that a young woman so situated would not need much persuasion to accept emancipation from her exile, when tendered by a brave and handsome young man like his friend, of independent fortune and liberal views: there were two ways in which a match of this description might turn out; Antonia might be grateful to the hand which released her, and from docility, increasing judgment, and knowledge, be induced eventually to become a Protestant, and an Englishwoman. Her affection for an amiable husband could hardly fail to increase, the longer she lived with him, and the more she was aware of the value of those connections to which he would introduce her; or she might merely make her marriage the medium of rescuing

her from a species of banishment, and restoring her to the gay world, where her beauty and accomplishments might awaken that admiration on which her vanity might feed, and the peace of her husband be lost.

Thus reasoning, Edward accompanied his friend to the gloomy castellated kind of mansion where don del Puego now resided, still an invalid from his wounds; he was not visible; but Antonia, who had been prepared for their reception, soon made her appearance, and received them with a kind of dignified affability—a species of hospitable ceremony, distinct from any thing Edward had witnessed before, but which was pleasing and satisfactory to him, under the impressions against her which he had imbibed; with her person he was by no means so much struck as he had expected to be, for having, at a very early period, set up Louisa as the standard of female beauty, he admired that of every other woman in proportion as it approached

or receded from her; hence even the liquid lustre of the Spanish eye, so long deemed unrivalled, did not atone to him for the deficiency of complexion to which the eye of Henry had been now long accustomed; and although he found the perfect symmetry of her features every moment gain in his sense of loveliness, he yet concluded he had seen many English girls equally pretty, and as his own eyes were pretty intelligent heralds of his thoughts, Henry was soon enabled to read them; and though vexed, he could not forbear to lead to the subject by saying—"I have frequently thought signora Antonia very like Miss Emma Sefton, Edward."

"So she is, very like her—a shade darker than Emma, who yet loses in the eye what she gains in the complexion: they are as much alike as two women of different countries can be."

"I thought your sister beautiful, till I saw Antonia."

"And having seen my sister ever since I can remembe., I thought nothing about

her, of course, which perhaps accounts for my being less struck than I am."

This was of course spoken aside, whilst Antonia gave orders for refreshments for the travellers, which were served not only in abundance, but with an air of splendor and parade which marked the riches and ostentation of the master. Henry repeatedly looked at his friend, as much as to say—"You see Antonia can have no motive for resigning her hand but love;" but Edward knew well, that a fine young woman, who has been in society, will not find the want of it supplied by massy plate, rich dishes, and numerous servants.

As, however, he was come to observe, not censure, he endeavoured to conquer his general retiring manners, and enter into conversation; the company was soon increased by the entrance of a priest, an elderly lady, and the master of the mansion, don Anathem del Puego. Edward was introduced to him, with due form, as the honourable Mr. Sefton, the eldest son

of lord Welbrooke; and Henry might have observed, that from this moment even Antonia looked upon the visitor more kindly; whether from the general kindness which pervaded the manners of all around him, or from the sincere desire he experienced to become fully acquainted with the parties, certain it was, that Edward took the general lead in conversation, though he was little understood, save by Antonia and Henry, who, on his part, experienced such anxiety that Edward and Antonia might be mutually pleased with each other, that he was wholly abstracted; and during even the infatuating presence of Antonia, his mind was perpetually reverting to England; his mother's eyes, sometimes smiling, but more frequently swimming in tears, were often before him, and the revered voice of sir Francis was continually in his ears; nor were the claims of Louisa less felt; he remembered the artless dignity and modest purity of her mind, the gentle suavity of her manners, the sensibility of her heart; he remembered how

often she had soothed his impetuous temper, how frequently she had been his mediator, in the days of boyhood, and how generously her purse had been opened to him, and ever at his disposal during his youth. She came over his mind as a lovely vision that wished to smile upon his nuptials, and give the hand of sisterhood to his bride—but a veil still sat upon the future: he was impatient for private conversation with Antonia; but he did not wish to break into that which appeared so well to pave her a kind reception with Edward, of whose judgment he had ever held the highest opinion, and whose candour he could no longer doubt.

At length, however, an opportunity occurred; Edward proposed a game at cards, in which he engaged the three elders; but Antonia persisted in sitting near Edward, for the purpose of instructing him in the terms of the Spanish language incident to the game. Henry was vexed with this; he had come for the express purpose of positively arranging, if not concluding, his

marriage, to which Antonia had given a tacit consent in the note he had received. During his last visit, she had given a kind of confidential history of herself, which had only heightened the interest with which she had inspired him, at the same time it had offered an opportunity for the exercise of his own liberality, which could scarcely fail to make an impression on her heart; but Henry, on recalling these circumstances, under his present frame of temper, could not help seeing that from the time he had declared himself, Antonia had worn fewer of those looks of love, those fascinating smiles, and spell-binding sighs, which had not only enthralled him by her charms, but by the appearance of her susceptibility towards himself; and at this moment he had all the inclination in the world to join with her English accusers, and call her a coquette.

The card-table was broke by the arrival of two Spanish officers, and a member of of the Cortes, who were on their way to the British camp, and claimed the hospi-

tality of the few gentlemen who had, since the dismissal of their own court, begun to live at their country seats. One of these officers was a very fine man in his person, and pleasing, though stately in his manners; his family was noble, and well known to don Anathea and his niece; the other two were tolerably agreeable specimens of their country; and Edward was much pleased with the incident. The whole party appeared to increase in vivacity, and, after supper, to enter into any scheme of amusement with alacrity. Antonia and the handsome capitaine performed duets together; after which, she sung several songs with a taste and captivating hilarity that appeared to charm all her auditors; and Henry, in the smiles of Edward, seemed to read his own justification. At length, as if to crown his exculpation, she consented to dance the bolero with their new guest, and performed to admiration; but Edward, during this exhibition, turned on Henry such decided looks of disapprobation, that he wished, a thousand times, it had never

been made, even though, in its progress, he perceived that his friend became softened, charmed; and at length expressed aloud his approbation and delight—a delight which likewise sparkled in the eyes of the fair performer.

"What do you say now?" whispered Henry.

"That I am inebriated, and ought therefore to say nothing," replied Edward.

"Is she not enchanting?"

"Yes; so was Circe; surely it is not from the feeling of an intoxication like this that you would marry? we will talk about it to-morrow."

To-morrow came—the guests departed; yet when they were gone, Antonia did not cease to be charming; she read in Edward's eyes a wish for music, and she played and sung alternately, whatever was most likely to enrapture, enliven, or penetrate the heart. When she touched on love, there was a melting softness in her eyes--a moving pathos in her voice, that seemed to bespeak a heart resigned to all

its power, and languishing to impart its weakness; and Edward had no doubt but with such pathetic tones and confessing regards as these, the volatile but susceptible Henry had been won; but he could not think they were any longer levelled at *him*, nor yet could he, for a moment, believe that a woman who felt what she expressed thus for one man, would allow herself to bestow such deluding graces on another: he was glad to observe that Antonia could condescend to be as charming, now the graceful and noble Spaniards were gone, as she was during their stay; but yet he could not reconcile her behaviour to his ideas of the anxiety incident to her situation, if she were, as he supposed she thought herself, on the point of forming a solemn engagement with a man who was almost a stranger to her, and who differed from her in country and religion. Altogether, Antonia was beyond his comprehension; and but for his ardent love for his friend, he would have sincerely repented having

undertaken a journey which had, perhaps, robbed him of some of the sweetest moments of existence, had infused many slight jealousies and corrosive cares in his own cup, and did not yet shew him any evident path for benefiting that friend.

On the evening of the second day, it was positively necessary for Henry to know his fate; he took Edward aside, and candidly confessed the extreme solicitude and the doubts he began to entertain respecting Antonia's affection, "without which," added he, "I must be decidedly miserable, since I am as well aware as you can be, that unless I was fully assured of her love, her beauty and her powers of pleasing would only add to my torments, since I could have no decided reliance on her principles."

"The conversation you are about to demand will of course prove decisive as to your marriage; but surely that event will not take place immediately?"

"Most likely it will not; Antonia does not appear in the humour to comply."

"Probably her uncle has influenced her?"

"Oh no; his whole conduct has been as fair and upright as that of a man of narrow views and obstinate resolutions could be; he objects to her marrying an heretic, which is only natural; but he says, "that if she will marry one, he would prefer me before any man in the world."

"Very handsome and proper; why do you blame him for obstinacy, since his prejudice is justifiable?"

"Oh, that is on another account. Antonia, the mother of his niece, was his favourite sister, and the only one who did not take the veil: early in life, meeting with a disappointment in love, he devoted himself to a single life, and to the advantageous disposal of his sister in marriage. She was an orphan, very beautiful, and possessing superior talents; and in order to give them every advantage, he permitted her to accompany a friend of hers, who had married a French nobleman, to Paris, to spend there the first year of her new

state. The ladies were both young and handsome, and from their novelty, attracted much attention; but the revolution breaking out, induced them suddenly to set out for England—a place which soon possessed only too many charms for Antonia, since she formed a passion there for a gentleman which ended only with her existence, but does not appear to have commenced until more than the term of her absence had expired, and until the nobleman who married her friend had returned to see after his property, and fallen a victim to the guillotine.

"Antonia, bitterly afflicted for her friend, could not bear to desert her, especially as she was on the eve of becoming a mother, when this dreadful news reached her. She awaited this period, which proved fatal both to the bereaved widow and her offspring; and Antonia, thus left destitute of friends, and nearly support, appears to have engaged the attention of a Mr. Maynard, or, as they term it, a chevalier Maynard, who induced her to consent to a pri-

vate marriage, alledging that his family, who were noble, would not forgive him for marrying a Catholic; therefore, until the death of his father, it was necessary to conceal the event.

"Antonia loved him, and was content; in the meantime, her brother, who was in the army, and extremely unhappy concerning her, sent over a trusty servant, on whom he could rely to bring her back; this person finding her married and pregnant, became extremely anxious to gain her the introduction to her husband's family, to which she had an undoubted right; but she positively forbade all attempts to that purpose; and the man, ignorant of the language and the customs, and habituated to obey command, easily desisted from any inquiry forbidden by her. He took with him an abundant supply of money, which she shewed to her husband, on his next visit, asking him if wealth would soften the heart of his father towards her? he replied, with tears, that it would *not*, and again besought her, in the most anxious manner,

never to reveal the connexion without his permission.

"On taking leave of her, he appeared extraordinarily agitated, and muttered some incoherent words, by which she understood that another connexion was at that time pressed upon him by his father. She urged him to fly with her to Spain, where her brother would shelter him from all persecutions, until the time when he could return in safety with her; but this he informed her was impossible, as their two countries were then going to war with each other, and the residence of an enemy, and a Protestant, in a country so bigotted as Spain, must be attended with much misery to them both. He departed in such evident distress, that she would not allow him to go until he had promised to return on the morrow.

"That morrow never came: at the very hour when she expected him, a letter was brought to her from a confidential servant, to inform her, (after a long precursory address), that the body of his master had

been found, that morning, in the Serpentine River, into which it was supposed he had fallen; but that, as it was taken out in different clothes from those he had worn, some suspicion naturally attached to the circumstance, and the utmost care was being taken by his family, to ward off the supposition that they had been instrumental to his suicide.

"This terrible shock for some weeks deprived poor Antonia of her senses; and the sole care of the Spaniard became the possibility of restoring her to her brother. She was still insensible when she was conveyed on shipboard; but the voyage proved of use to her, not only in regaining her reason, but her general health; and two months after her arrival, she became the mother of Antonia, who is now about eighteen, and on whom she lavished all that tenderness she had formerly bestowed on her father, and exerted those powers which had formerly captivated him, receiving from her brother all the attention which his service permitted him to bestow,

and every help his fortune enabled him to give."

"A melancholy story indeed," observed Edward; "an orphan so situated has a claim on every one's feelings."

"But you have not heard the oddest part of the story; when this girl was about eleven years of age, signora Antonia received a letter, which, from its date, appeared to have been written seven years, (and which had, by a negligence no ways uncommon here, at a distance from sea-port towns, or others of commercial importance, lain in the post-office during that time), informing her, that the person so drowned in the Serpentine at that time was not Maynard, who had imposed upon her by a feigned account of his death, he being at this time in perfect health, and the father of a family of children, who would inherit his fortune, unless she, just to herself and her offspring, condemned him to the punishment the English law permits.

"This letter was written by the same

servant who had informed her of his death, and was so evidently done in a moment of pique, that those friends to whom the signora shewed it advised her to think no more of it; but the heart of Antonia was not to be so soothed; she had loved as a wife, wept as a widow; and her sorrows and wrongs called in her heart for revenge.

"She would have instantly set out for England, but remembering the length of time which had elapsed since the letter was written, she became convinced that she should have a labyrinth to unwind, beyond her power of elucidation; and that as death might, ere now, have indeed set his seal on her betrayer, she could gain no revenge on him, and would add to her own sorrows by opening the springs of memory anew.

"Don Anathea, unhappily, was then at a great distance, assisting the war against the Algerines; when he returned, on being informed of this circumstance, he unhappily took it into his head that the whole story had been a feint to impose upon

him, and that Antonia never had been married; declaring that he held it utterly impossible that any member of his family, on the receipt of such a letter, could have forborne instantly to set out, and, if possible, punish the author of her miseries.

"The signora had been in a slowly-declining state ever since the receipt of this letter; but she had disguised her illness from her attendants, by the double anxiety she had shewn in the education of her daughter. On hearing these reproaches, she expressed the greatest willingness to set out immediately for England; but before the necessary preparations could be made, she became too ill to be removed; and though, from time to time, her spirits rose, and she flattered herself that she could at least be able to convince her brother of her sincerity and veracity, yet she struggled in vain for power: latent disease combined with incurable sorrow, and she died about the time when Antonia reached her fifteenth year."

"Poor woman! if she were indeed de-

ceived, how much has that Maynard to answer for!" said Edward.

"I pity her sincerely," returned Henry; "but yet she was to blame in some things: she indulged a thirst of revenge, utterly incompatible with the spirit of Christianity, during the latter part of her life, and entailed it on her daughter, whom she enjoined to seek her father, and, if possible, to marry an Englishman, in order that she might be assisted in the discovery; and I have no doubt but such discovery was meant, not more for the purpose of clearing her own character, than in some way to take vengeance on his perfidy; for this purpose she instructed her daughter thoroughly in the English language, and endeavoured to perfect her in those arts which are universally seductive to man, less as feminine accomplishments, I fear, than allurements. Heighho! this long story has made me quite wretched."

"Or rather, the thoughts that rise out of it: well, but you have not told me what took Antonia to England."

"Partly the troubles of the country, and partly her own desire, joined to her uncle's, that her father should be discovered; she came with a merchant, who was well fitted to investigate the matter, and whose connexions were very genteel: he found the register of the marriage regular, but he found no more; the name was not very uncommon; and he traced Maynards in high life, and Maynards in the shade; noble Maynards, and ignoble Maynards; but not one that could, by any ingenuity of supposition, be deemed the father of Antonia: meantime, she herself became enamoured of English habits and manners; and 'tis very strange that no one of the many who were enamoured of her did not keep her amongst them."

"How did she come at York, where your passion first seized you?"

"I never knew exactly, for she certainly has never intended to take the veil."

"Then I must become the narrator, and say at least what I have heard, and which,

coming out undesignedly and tallying with circumstances, appears to be truth."

Edward then circumstantially, but without comment, related the conversation which had alarmed the baronet and himself, and which spoke of Antonia either as a coquettish girl, who sought amusement in the triumphs of a heartless vanity, or a designing one, who wished to allure some wealthy noble lover into marriage, by means on the very verge of chastity, and certainly not consistent with the decorum a virtuous education warrants. Henry heard all this with profound attention; and an anxious, wandering gaze in some moments, a fixed and stupid stare at others, bespoke the disquietude of his heart, and a sense of insufficiency in his judgment, in objects where that heart, so warm and so peremptory, was concerned.

"I thought the baronet very out of the way in requiring obedience, to be sure," said Henry; "but I was wrong; I should have remembered that he never was inordinate

in his expectations, or inconsistent in any thing."

"Undoubtedly he is a very worthy man, and possesses a superior judgment; but many years are passed since he was of our age, and he cannot, perhaps, exactly judge what were our feelings; he has a claim upon your consideration, but not on your obedience."

"Yes, he has a positive claim—he ought to wrest me even from the altar, if, in yielding to him, I injured only myself; but surely when a man has engaged himself without mentioning any rights, it is too late to bring them in as a plea for breaking his contract, if that contract includes another's happiness. I must suffer for my folly."

"Much may be said on both sides, certainly: you believe that you are very dear to Antonia?"

"I *did* believe—that is, I concluded so; but I begin to doubt it; I am really unhappy; and I shall be unhappy—I see I shall."

"You will at least be relieved from one source of anxiety soon: it is time for you to go to Antonia—see, here is a servant."

A servant did indeed approach, who appeared to have a note, but on seeing them, hid it, and retired hastily.

"That note was for you," said Edward; "I will retire; it may save you the painful part of your expected interview."

Edward left the gallery where they had been walking, and turning into a passage, sought his own room, close by the door of which the servant stood, who immediately gave him the billet.

"This is a mistake, friend," said Edward; but on casting his eyes on the note, he perceived it addressed to him; he therefore entered his chamber and read—

"Tell me, I beseech you, what has brought you hither? did you come to witness the marriage of your friend, or to dissolve it? Tell me candidly, but se-

riously, which event you would rather should take place; lose not a single instant; at another time I will account for and apologize for this abruptness.

"ANTONIA.

"The servant waits."

Edward was still deeply ruminating when the servant tapped at the door, and demanded the answer; as he spoke no English, there was little difficulty in trusting him. Edward received from him a pencil, and wrote on the back of the paper—

"Truth compels me to own, that I had rather not see my friend in possession even of the beautiful and accomplished Antonia. When she grants me time, I too will apologize for abruptness."

"E. SEFTON."

The servant was scarcely gone, when

Edward was summoned to the chess-board, in which he had promised to engage don Anathea; he had been seated about an hour, when Henry entered the room; and although he was engaged much with his game, considering the solicitude he felt on a nearer subject, he yet observed that his face was flushed, his air that of extreme agitation, and he was sensible that he was in a state of great suffering.

Edward lost the game.

"We are both losers," said Henry; "and the sooner we depart the better."

Don Anathea said—"You must not depart to-night, my young friend."

"At least we will adjourn to the venta; we have already encroached too long on your hospitality, sir."

There was an air of haughty resolution in this speech, which appeared to proceed from a mind so deeply irritated, that entreaty would be insult; and it is more than probable that don Anathea was not sorry for the resolution, nor the steps which led

to it, though there is no doubt but he had a sincere regard for his guest, and felt truly grateful to him for the life he was now beginning to enjoy again: he commanded every accommodation to be made for the gentlemen, and said, "that if they chose to travel a stage that night, two of his servants should escort them."

"We are Englishmen," said Henry, somewhat contemptuously.

"I should be the last person, surely," replied don Anathea, with a courteous air, "to dispute your courage; but yet three against a band of robbers may be——"

"My dear sir, pardon me," said Henry, hastily catching his hand; "I will gratefully accept your offer. I beg you to remember me with part of the affection I shall ever feel for you."

The old man was affected. At this moment he certainly felt sorry that his niece had refused him, which he doubted not was the case, and at this moment too, Edward felt sorry that he should see Antonia no more; and considering himself as the

medium of that sentence which had indeed torn Henry from happiness, gave him a sense of oppression even to wretchedness.

They were leaving the house; in doing which, Henry took the lead, stalking forward with that forced stability, which, in assuming strength, betrays its weakness; and Edward was following with that loitering step, which does not fear to show a natural and honest regret, when the same servant he had seen before pulled his cloak, and on his turning, put another billet into his hand, accompanying the action with a gesture of secresy. Edward hastily put the note into his pocket; and, for the first time since he had engaged in this transaction, a blush rose to his cheek; but it was transitory, and merely crossed him as he whispered to himself—"This is the land of intrigue."

"Had we not better stop at the venta to-night," said Edward, "and set out by sunrise?"

"I care not," was the reply.

To the venta they went; and as it hap-

pened to contain two miserable outlets, dignified by the name of chambers, and Edward perceived that Henry was too much agonized for conversation, he proposed instantly withdrawing to his own, which was exactly at the other end of the oblong building which constituted what in Spain is an inn; in England, would be a miserable barn.

Although Edward was truly sorry for Henry, and justly imagined that his manly spirit preferred venting its grief in solitude, to displaying its weakness even to a friend, yet we must suppose that he felt some little curiosity to read the note, which he expected to find a friendly farewell from Antonia; he opened it, and with much surprise read these words:—

"Surely you will not leave this place without asking or giving explanation; you have assumed the right of disposing of my hand, but you cannot be so cruel as to claim that of throwing away my

happiness, and must be aware how nearly it is connected with yourself. I am cast upon your mercy, but I cannot fear, for you are an Englishman; and surely you, who estimate the duties of friendship so highly, will deem them still more sacred when claimed by a woman. It is necessary for me to see you—I cannot live without your esteem; I have something to——".

The note here broke off, as if the writer had been suddenly interrupted. Greatly troubled, yet certainly flattered, experiencing a new but vexatious and perplexing sensation, Edward was still standing with it in his hand, when his door suddenly opened; he thrust the paper into his bosom, and beheld, with considerable confusion, Henry enter, and throw himself into a chair, with the air of one whose restless spirit is compelled to seek for comfort; after a pause, he began with—"You see what a devil of a situation this gipsey has brought me into."

"I perceive, indeed, you are unhappy; but I trust, that although you feel it like a man, that you will also bear it like a man. I presume Antonia at least eased you from the torment of suspense?"

"You suppose then that she refused me?"

"I conclude it from your manners."

"You are mistaken; I don't know how she managed, but she teased and provoked me till I believe I refused her; and I am only vexed with myself for not doing it when I received her letter, boldly and at once, as an act of obedience to my mother. I should then have cheated her of the triumph of seeing her power over me, which, to my utter mortification, I have done only too completely; it makes me mad to think of it."

She could not doubt your love for her before now, therefore I don't see why you should vex yourself at a very natural exhibition of it."

"Had you seen her, Edward, had you heard the quiet way in which she seconded

my observation on the duty I owed my invaluable mother, the yawning apathy with which she listened to the trials of that matchless woman, and the wonderful ease with which she heard me describe the pangs which tore my very soul—but what folly it is to talk! she *cannot* love—no, not at *all*; I am quite convinced she has not the slightest regard for me, nor ever had."

Henry looked in his friend's face, as much as to say—"For God's sake contradict me!"

Edward, loth to disappoint him, yet unwilling to assert an untruth, said—"She perhaps affects apathy; people do when they are offended."

"But she never was offended; she who is so lively, so sensible, so awake to pleasure or pain, was perfectly calm, whilst I was absolutely mad; in the very midst of my agonies, when my heart seemed torn in twain, she asked me—now what do you think she asked me?"

"I cannot possibly guess."

"Fifty questions about you, all in a breath."

"Indeed!"

"How old you were, where your father lived, if you were independent, and such like confounded nonsense: no, no—say what you please, that woman does not *love* me."

"I fear, indeed, she does not."

"Yet certainly there was great anxiety in her eyes when I parted with her, and she repeatedly asked me to sleep at the house; and by the way, she said not a word about that note which we saw in the man's hand."

"She is not worthy of you," said Edward; "you must endeavour to forget her."

"Never, never, never! whatever may be her faults, I shall never behold such another; you have seen nothing of her—you can form no conception of her character; she is indeed unique; nothing can be compared with her—she is absolutely——

Henry, in the midst of his eulogium, flung out of the room, angry with himself, his friend, and all the world, save his mistress; and Edward finished the sentence for him, by saying—"She is utterly unworthy half the love thy honest, open, generous bosom, bestows upon her; and ——"

His soliloquy was interrupted by Diego, the landlord, informing him, in a yawning voice, that a cavaliero below desired to speak with him; but before he had time to reply, the cavaliero, closely wrapt in his cloak, presented himself at the door, and seemed to force entrance, less by courtesy than necessity.

Edward was by no means pleased with behaviour so much *sans ceremonie*, in a country where he expected to find precisely the reverse; having, however, no idea that the stranger had any designs but upon his purse, he stept back, and cast his eye upon the table where his pistols lay, and in doing so, the eye of the stranger fol-

lowed, and, as it was plain, understood him, for instantly throwing back his cloak, he discovered that he was unarmed.

Edward courteously offered a chair, and in doing so, began to address him with the little Spanish he was master of, when instantly a voice, but too familiar, exclaimed—"Surely you know me! in this place, at least, there can be no second being so wretched as to need this disguise."

"Signora Antonia! pardon me, I did *not* know you."

"And you will say that you are astonished to see me! yet how could you suppose that a woman who had made you the arbiter of her fate, in the most momentous concern of her life, should part with you for ever, without explaining why she did so?"

"I wished to hear your explanation—I wished too to have seen you, and thanked you for the pleasure you have given me; but it appeared necessary for the peace of my friend to depart immediately; and I knew not how far the customs of your coun-

try authorized me in demanding a private interview; nor knew I how, in a moment of lively emotion, you might be disposed to grant it; but believe me, lady, I felt no common disappointment in the moment of parting from a mansion you have rendered a fairy palace."

"Praise me not, Mr. Sefton, or praise me for that you love better than the tinsel which glitters not for you; I am aware that you came to discover and expose a coquette, and you have done so, less to your friend than to me; but do not condemn me till you have heard somewhat of my sad story. Know I abhor this country, not from terror of its invaders, but contempt for its habits; and to my desire of settling in yours is added a species of necessity, since I bound myself, by oath, to a dying parent, to marry only thither. When in England, I omitted no opportunity, as I believed, of forwarding my plan; and on your mentioning the name of sir Bennet Lawson, I had little doubt but you had heard my name coupled with

his, in a way probably little to my credit. Forced back into this country, at the very time when I was anxious, to very madness, to remain, you cannot wonder that the attentions of an Englishman, introduced to me by his virtues, handsome in his person, and evidently capable of warm attachment, should interest me highly, even though he failed to inspire the passion he felt and professed."

"Indeed I cannot be surprised at any part of the affair, except the last clause."

"I believe my heart has been hardened against your sex, by the cares of my mother, who sought to save me from partaking the sorrows a too susceptible bosom seldom fails to meet with; but——what would I say? I have liberated your friend; he has a noble heart; do I not deserve your thanks for freeing him from a marriage that would have tied him to misery?"

"Certainly not misery; although an union in which dissimilar views and principles——"

"Talk not of views and principles; the

heart that loves, feels, thinks, and believes, with the being of its choice; but had I married your friend, this had never been our case. In shewing him the coldness of my heart, I have enabled him to follow the dictates of his principles, and obey his parent's commands, and the advice of you, his friend; but oh, Edward! had I *loved* him, I would have clung round him as the vine encircles her supporter—I would have humbled myself to these relations, whose very virtue would have led them to encourage my humility; at their will I would have ceased even to delight him, and by the perfection of my obedience, evinced my love; you know not what a heart like mine can accomplish."

"Indeed you wrong me, Antonia; I believe you capable of every thing."

"In pity say that again! alas! it is not true; but oh, in pity say it! for the memory of your praise is all that I shall shortly have to live upon."

The tender looks of Antonia gave Ed-

ward a kind of fear, lest she was practising upon him a new and more subtle species of deceit than any she had yet practised. Skilled to discern, even what was passing in the minds of the world's votaries, no wonder that she read every thought of his heart in his ingenuous countenance, and instantly added—"You are deceived—grossly deceived, if you believe that Antonia ever violated either truth or modesty, so far as to confess a passion for any man. Henry, whose wife, at this moment, I might have been, but for your interference, will acquit me; the vanity of man misinterprets slight favours into serious confessions; with that vanity I have sported."

"It is very natural that an attached man, revering, admiring, as well as loving, should do so; and from your own account of your love-affairs, I am obliged to conclude that your *slight favours* were *intended* to charm and bewilder the unhappy lovers we have spoken of; besides,

how can I have resided under the same roof two days, and doubt your powers of enchantment?"

"Oh Heavens!" cried Antonia, throwing herself into a chair, as if unable to bear the emotion under which she laboured; her face was alternately flushed and pale, her whole frame trembled, her respiration was difficult, and it was evident that she was no longer an actress: her eyes were fixed upon Edward with an expression of agonizing yet tender inquiry, as with difficulty she pronounced—"*You* do not doubt my powers! oh, speak again!"

Exhausted by the apparent struggle of pride and passion, she threw her head backward, opened her waistcoat, and made a sign that she wanted air. Edward, really distressed for her and for himself, opened the window, and would have led her to it, but she sunk in his arms, as if nearly fainting—he then seated her on the floor, and forced her to take a little wine.

The deep tone of compassion with which

he spoke, and the care he took to avoid the slightest noise, affected her excessively; she was condemned to feel that mortification which most poignantly affects a woman alive to virtue, but subdued by passion, the sense of being only *pitied*. She burst into a flood of tears; and when able to articulate, she bewailed her misfortune in words so touching, a peculiarity of expression all her own, and combined of all most moving in both languages, that Edward felt his very soul was shaken; he too trembled, and he could have wept.

"You cannot hate me," said Antonia, "but I dread your despising me; yet why feel contempt for me because I have felt admiration, friendship, *love*, for you? condemned at length to experience that which I have only feigned till now, you will at least enjoy the satisfaction of knowing, that in conquering, you have reformed a heart capable of virtue—a heart that too late feels the value of that esteem it must never, never hope to enjoy!"

Edward confusedly besought her to be calm, and protested that she had already his esteem—his friendship.

"Do not torture me; love asks for *love;* your own heart tells you *that*—— Oh Edward! do not affect that which is opposite to your nature! say, do you—can you—oh spare me another question!"

"My heart has been long devoted to ——"

"Hush!" cried Antonia rising; "do not murder me; I will release you from the misery my presence doubtless inflicts on you!"

At this instant Edward perceived a picture, surrounded with diamonds, on the breast of Antonia; it was that of a young and handsome man; the glance, though momentary, inspired him with rage; he almost pushed her from him; in doing so, the picture turned, and he beheld, far more plainly, the face of a beautiful woman! the thoughts of her parents, whose portraits were thus cherished by her, gave a new turn to his feelings; and as

he gazed on her, the tears of pure compassion trickled down his cheeks, and for a moment he folded her in his arms, with the same chaste affection that he might have felt when holding Emma or Adelaide to his bosom; but perceiving how impossible it was for Antonia to comprehend his feeling, and that a new hope already sparkled in her eyes, he hastened her away; and replying to her entreaties, "that he would not betray her," saw her, with sincere pleasure, join her attendant below, and depart.

This adventure was really a source of sincere grief to Edward; but such had been his torture, during its continuance, and, at some peculiar moments, his danger, that he felt, as he watched the steps of Antonia, whose attendant carried a lamp, such a sense of relief, as disposed him to general tranquillity; and aware that the night was far advanced, he flung himself upon his mattrass and sunk into profound repose.

Scarcely were the eyes of Edward seal-

ed in balmy slumber, when Henry awoke from his short unquiet sleep; and perceiving that the sun was risen, awoke his servant, and hastening down stairs, roused Diego, who was snoring with the muleteers on the floor, and was proceeding towards the chamber of his friend, when the former perceiving his intention, exclaimed—" Now, by the beard of St. Januarius, the young gentleman ought not to be awakened these three hours; for 'tisn't half a one since the little cavaliero left him."

" What cavaliero?" said Henry.

" Nay, that's no affair of mine; some visitant, as I took it, from the great don's; all I know of the youth is this, that I'll swear he's beardless, though I never saw his chin."

Vexed with the interruption, yet puzzled by the information, Henry passed on to the chamber where Edward slept; he was still in his clothes, and there was the appearance of two persons having sat there. Impatient to know if any messenger had been to him, with news from An-

tonia, he approached to awake him, when, rumpled, but sticking out of his bosom, he perceived the note, which he had some indistinct idea that Edward was reading when he had entered the room. The thoughts of Antonia's note, crossed him, and suspicion entered his mind; he stooped forward, perceived it was indeed her handwriting, which was singular; being a perfect Italian, he clearly descried the words "you have assumed the right of disposing of my hand."

He put forth his hand to seize the paper, but shrinking back, he hurried down stairs, and in a voice of thunder, ordered the mules. He was slowly obeyed; for the thunder of command never produced the lightning of obedience or activity in Spain: forced into a temporary calm, he employed the time in farther interrogatories respecting the visit Edward had received; and he set out with all the certainty which fact and suspicion (which ever goes beyond fact) could gain, that his lover and his friend were wretches so base, so perjured, so de-

ceitful, that it were folly even to waste a thought upon them.

Often would he stop and consider whether it were not best to return and punish Edward's unheard-of treachery on the spot; happily the honour of a soldier forbade this; he had not a moment to lose; and his own private injuries must go unpunished, until his leave of absence was renewed. By degrees his fury gave way to bitter grief; and the memory of his own love for Edward, their boyish affection, and the astonishing proof of a pure friendship which he had just received from him, softened the severity of his rage; he remembered how he had himself been entranced by Artemia, and he pitied the perversion of principle she had occasioned in one so excellent; with this came the remembrance of Louisa, to whom he considered his friend as betrothed by sir Francis; and again anger took place of sorrow. The distraction of his mind increased every hour; and he arrived at the camp almost in a state of madness, and found, with a

species of sullen delight, that the enemy was near, and that perpetual action might now be expected to take place between adversaries within so short a distance of each other.

Meantime Edward slept in peace; awakening at a late hour, he arose, and sought his friend; finding he had set out so long before, his first idea was, that Henry, being pressed for time, and conscious of his own unfitness for company had merely left him at liberty to reap the benefit of leisure; but certain wise looks and nods of Diego led him, at length, to guess the truth, and become aware of all the miseries Antonia's ill-timed visit was likely to produce, and the vexation visible in his countenance led the mischievously simple landlord to comprehend that he had done a worse turn than he had intended. His apologies were not understood; but the very mention of names induced Edward to conclude that Henry had left the place under the impression of anger, heightened by grief and previous vexation.

This state of inquietude he was obliged to endure many hours, as it was impossible for him to procure any kind of conveyance; and although now accustomed to the delays of Spanish inns, and the tardiness and scarsity of muleteers, he yet was too truly English to submit with patience; and never had time passed so wretchedly as now, since he was determined not only to abstain from visiting at the house of don Anathea, but resolutely to hide himself from Antonia, should chance or inquiry lead her to find out his present situation; and he determined rather to endure starvation in a filthy room, amidst the stench of garlic, rancid oil, poultry, pigs, and other inhabitants, than dare the abodes of luxury and fascination, which might, under existing feelings and circumstances, be too much for him: he felt that it was wiser to fly than conquer; but the more he thought on the subject, the more angry he became with Henry for daring to doubt him.

It was nearly evening when the jaded beasts returned that had conveyed his

friend; eager and rejoiced to see them, he forgot his caution, and went to the door to examine their powers of returning with *him;* whilst he spoke, one of the servants of don Anathea passed, and, as might be expected, made quick report of what he had seen. Edward returned, dispirited and perplexed, into the house, counting the hours till morning, and turning round and round the unsavoury olio hunger yet compelled him to eat: he had scarcely swallowed two mouthfuls, when a billet was presented him, containing these words:—

"Is it to fortune, or to a kinder cause, that I am indebted to the chance of seeing you again? for surely you will see me. The bearer will tell you how this may be effected; my mind has been in a state of perpetual agitation since we met; surely your friend does not suspect the unhappy passion which tortures me? I rely upon you to guard my secret; and since you will grant me only the cold tenderness of a

brother's regard, preserve, at least, my honour with a brother's care. I cannot see you till the family have retired for the night, Juan will arrange our interview. Most anxiously, but, alas!

"Most fondly, yours,

"ANTONIA."

For a few minutes Edward found a severe struggle in his mind, notwithstanding all his previous resolutions; and as he answered not, the attendant gave him to understand that he would be with him at a proper time for conducting him to don Anathea's. Edward heard in silence; and giving the man a piece of money, he departed. After viewing the affair in various points of view, at length he prevailed on himself to write—

"Cruel, and too-charming Antonia, why do you compel me to refuse any

request of yours? I dare not—will not see you, at least not until my friend, who has fled from me in anger, is assured that I am incapable of wronging him: adieu! be happy! Should the invasion which now desolates your country force you to take refuge in mine, look to me as a friend ever ready to assist—ever desirous to benefit you; if not, endeavour to forget

"Your obliged and sincere friend,

"E. SEFTON."

Having sealed this note, Edward became anxious so to feed and fee the mules and the muleteer, as to persuade them to set out with him at midnight, regardless of those dangers with which Diego continued to threaten him, and which he had heard sufficient of the night before, to induce his stay. Parties of the French were indeed his dread; but he spoke their language so well, that he flattered himself it were possible to deceive them; and the plans he laid for this purpose, happily

occupied his mind, and prevented him from the dangerous contemplation of Antonia, especially as they made him frequently revert to the scenes of his youth— to Louisa, whom he had assisted a little in her studies, and to Henry, who had partaken them with him.

The mules were saddled, and Edward was stalking, with long steps, before the inn, waiting the approach of Juan, and contrasting the wild and desolate appearance of all around him with the beauties and comforts of his own country villages, when the latter arrived, and, by a sign, entreated him to follow in silence.

Edward presented the note, and told him, as well as he could, that the mules were ready to depart with him, and that indispensable business obliged him to go instantly.

A flash of contemptuous anger passed the Spaniard's brow, and for a moment Edward recoiled from the idea of revenge, which is ever associated by our first im-

pressions—our nursery-trained feelings of the Spanish character, with any occasion of anger; but a little thought reconciled him to the fine perception of honour, and the faithfulness which this implied to his mistress, and he left Juan with something bordering on respect.

Having satisfied all demands previously, he mounted and set out under the advantage of a rising moon; and plunged into a deep reverie on the peculiarity of his situation, which appeared sufficiently romantic for that of a knight-errant, forgot all his fears of both French and robbers, although the muleteer did not fail to descant on them; and, from time to time, they passed little wooden crosses, the mementoes of some person having been murdered in those dreary glens, which were far more eloquent, in their inspiration of melancholy, than the fears of Jachimo.

Edward was, however, so happy as to escape all dangers, and arrive safely, though wearied and dispirited, at the end of his journey the day following, about noon.

The looks of important bustle, which every where met the eye, not only roused him from his languor, but awoke that sense of national consequence and military ardour perhaps inseparable from a young and gallant Englishman in such a scene as this, whatever might be otherwise his individual character and pursuits; and it was probably the feeling thus inspired, in addition to the reiterated entreaty of Antonia, that induced him to meet the defiance of Henry's look with a look of defiance also, since, however little he really merited the suspicions of his friend, certainly suspicion was natural, and he well knew that calm investigation was not Henry's forte.

"The manner in which you receive me, appears of a piece with that in which you left me," said Sefton.

"Then I have the credit of consistency," replied Henry, "a credit which cannot be given, I apprehend, even to the considering, philosophizing Mr. Sefton."

"Before you adopt this language, you

would do well to recollect how very lately you held the same, and how much you repented, or *seemed* to repent of it, Henry."

"I know not 'seems;' I am as much a stranger to it as Hamlet; but 'tis natural for an adept to suspect others; I may, however, be mistaken—I am impetuous. Confess to me honestly and freely, that you have held some secret intercourse with Antonia, and, wretched as I am, I will not forget all that you *have been*—I will not call you villain!"

Edward was silent; but scorn was on his lip; he felt that he ought to be trusted. His wearisome journey, his parting from those so dear, his late patience, his sincere anxiety, his pure friendship, all were before him; and even his renunciation of Antonia's love made no small appearance in the catalogue of his good offices.

"You do not speak; by Heaven, you cannot! you have robbed me of the only woman I could ever love, and by a refinement in mischief, placed the dagger in my own hand, with which to destroy my

peace—nay, sir, gaze not on me! I am not in a passion—I speak the truth, and am as little in the humour to be whined over by a *consoler*, as to be deceived by a liar."

"Liar! captain Deverell, do you call *me* a liar?"

"Not strictly speaking; for you have not either denied or confessed that you are the lover of Antonia: lover, did I say?—seducer, I should have said."

"You appear well inclined to say any thing, and of course look to the tendency of every thing you do say: you are a military man, governed by laws which you have long known my principles abhor, and to be consistent either with my friendship or my professions, I cannot act upon. I will not, for a hasty word, spoken in passion, (much as I confess it angers me,) seek the life of a man whom I have crossed the seas to save; no—though you call me coward too, I will not."

Henry paused a moment; then, as if stung by new memory of wrong, he exclaimed—

"I saw, with my own eyes, a note written by Antonia in your vest; doubtless the very note which Juan appeared bringing to me; was the concealment of this incident worthy of you as my friend?"

"You did not see *that* note; I had it not."

"Pitiful equivocation! can you deny that Antonia herself visited you—was in your chamber two hours? if it was not her, some female from the chateau; I'm sure it was; and if so, does it become you to conceal a circumstance which lays open *her* character to suspicion? do you not become a silent but sure assassin of her reputation?"

"Can you suppose that I should betray the woman who thus confided in me?"

"Do not equivocate: for God's sake, Edward—for the sake of all we both hold dear, tell me, was it Lucilla who visited you? in one word, answer me."

"It was *not*; are you satisfied now?"

"Then it *was*—it must be Antonia."

"*Be* assured I *never will* inform you; if,

after all you have known of me, you choose to suspect me, I must be content to lie under your suspicion."

"Mean, prevaricating wretch! you heap misery on my head, and refuse to——"

"I refuse nothing. If I have wronged you, I offer you the revenge you ask for; nor will I make one comment on your conduct, though a thousand rise to my lips."

Edward flung out of the room: every word that Henry had spoken rose again and again to his mind, in every form of insult; and he felt as if he had been offended sufficiently to justify the breach of a resolution long since taken, never to give a challenge; but in a short time, he was enabled to recollect the circumstances which naturally tortured the mind of Henry, and goaded him to a conduct which he could not fail to repent bitterly, and which Edward became soon aware that he could freely forgive, conscious that a more generous and manly heart beat not in any bosom than that of his friend.

Whilst his irritated feelings were thus slowly subsiding, and reason was recovering her sway, an officer of Henry's acquaintance presented him the challenge he but half expected, believing that his friend, like himself, was beginning to be convinced that he was wrong; but unhappily their dispute was in a great measure overheard; and Henry had found all his angry feelings rendered more poignant, from accidentally seeing the muleteer who had brought Edward, and who had mentioned that they waited half-an-hour to send a letter by a servant who came for it; under this impression he had written, desiring Edward to meet him at sunrise.

There can be little doubt but that if the same circumstance had occurred in England, that Edward would have expostulated with Henry—have stooped to explanation, or have claimed the interference of friendship, and saved his friend from running the dreadful risk of becoming the murderer of the man he loved; but he felt aware that in his present situation,

every step he could take towards reconciliation would be liable to misconstruction, both on his own part and that of Henry; he therefore assented, as to an irremediable evil, and smothering the sigh which burst from his heart, informed the bearer that captain Deverell would find him at the time and place appointed.

"You have a friend, sir?"

"I have *no* friend here, sir."

As Edward spoke these words, his very heart seemed cleft in twain. He suddenly turned away, unable to conceal his emotion, yet fearful that it should be mistaken: the officer withdrew.

For near two hours Edward sought in vain to reduce the variety of thoughts, vexatious, perplexing, and sorrowful, which rose, in chaotic confusion, on his mind, to some kind of order and calmness; all was uproar and confusion; yet amidst all, the still, small voice of conscience was heard, and it whispered, "thou art wrong;" but it was as perpetually answered, "I am a man more sinned against than sinning;"

and from this answer at length sprung a species of melancholy tranquillity, a resignation to the necessities which seemed alike to enthral the challenger and the challenged.

Under this idea Edward wrote a few hasty lines to Henry, meant to convey his perfect forgiveness, in case he fell, and he endeavoured likewise to address his mother; but to this he felt unequal; a flood of tenderness rushed over his soul, on memory of her, and what her sufferings would be in such a case, and he was compelled to lay down the pen; he felt as if he had no right to dispose of a life so valuable as his own must be to her, nor entail the miseries of existence upon one to whom every future year would be lengthened sorrow. Under this impression he hastily arose, took his hat, and was about to visit Henry, and remonstrate with him on the guilt and folly of their conduct; but he was met at the door by the officer who had brought him the challenge, accompanied by another, of most respect-

able appearance, who was introduced to him as a gentleman who knew his family, and had been acquainted with the secret in agitation, for the express purpose of doing him service.

Thus an incident prevented him from making a termination, perhaps, ere now, still more desired by Henry than himself; for the conversation of these gentlemen not only restored his first feelings on the subject, but fully confirmed him in the belief that both Henry's character and his own depended on the meeting. The conversation was short, polite, and decisive; the present and eternal interests of two human beings, young, amiable, widely-connected, truly-attached, in possession of health, talents, prosperity, and friends, were discussed with ease, civility, and *sang-froid*—such is the force of custom; but it must be observed that, in this case, one gentleman chose another as his coadjutor whose opinions and habits resembled his own, and that it would have been very possible that many officers, in the circle of

Henry's acquaintance, would have interfered in a very different manner, and been anxious to reconcile two young men, who, but a week before, had embraced each other as the dearest friends; and particularly when they considered that one was not bound by the punctilios which held the other in a species of bondage, inimical to free discussion and the liberties of early friendship.

CHAP. VII.

EDWARD, having never closed his eyes the night before, and taken little sustenance during this terribly eventful day, might be said to have even redoubled his general paleness, when, soon after sunrise, he took his way to the place appointed. Conscious of his appearance, he became more anxious to be on the spot before his antagonist—a circumstance which evidently exalted him in the eyes of his second, who, on perceiving the other party approach, accompanied by a servant and the surgeon, said, with the air of a man who expects to be refused—"Have you positively determined, Mr. Sefton, to make no apology to captain Deverell?"

"Having neither injured nor insulted him, I can make no apology."

A few words passed between the seconds, when Edward's friend, *pour l'occasion*, said

to him—"You have a right to the first fire, sir."

"That right I wave entirely."

The ground was marked; it was on a little plain, through which ran the road they had taken so lately to visit Antonia. This circumstance new-strung the nerves of Henry, who, after the first glance, did not, however, once look in Edward's face, which, pale as it was, varied not in a feature.

They fired at the same moment; Edward into the air, as he had always intended; but Henry's ill-directed ball entered near the collarbone, and lodged in the fleshy part of Edward's neck; he staggered, and clapping his hand on the part, cried—"Are you satisfied?" Blood flowed profusely from the wound; the surgeon ran to support him, and a moment after he fainted in his arms, overcome not more by the wound than previous exhaustion.

In that dreadful moment, what were the agonies of Henry! His friend, his long-

loved, long-valued friend, lay before him, apparently bereft of life by his own hand, by the man whose welfare he had sought by a species of self-immolation. More pale than him he contemplated, he gazed upon him in all the horror of remorse; alive only to the exquisite suffering which every moment increased upon his heart, as every moment served to recal some instance of his love, his forbearance, his integrity, and even in the last moment, his determination to spare the man who had insulted him and sought his life.

The officer who supported Edward began seriously to fear that the wound was immediately mortal, imagining it had perforated the throat, and he therefore hastily took from his pocket the note he had seen him put there, directed for captain Deverell. Henry was unable to read it, and when his friend did it for him, the free forgiveness and manly feeling it expressed did not appear to make any new impression upon him; it was only what might have been expected, he thought, from Edward.

His silence as to the cause of the quarrel surprised the gentleman; it pained Henry, but yet, to a slight degree, communicated relief, by granting a species of self-justification. He assisted in bearing Edward to a cottage across the road, and had the satisfaction of perceiving that the motion restored him to life. He opened his eyes, and said—"Where is Henry?"

His own name thus pronounced overcame all the little fortitude that remained; dropping the arm he had supported, Henry sunk on his knees and wept. A horseman was seen coming down the road, and his friends besought him to exert himself. He rose, and ere he could reply, saw in the person of the traveller, who had the appearance of having rode in haste, Juan, the servant of Antonia.

An involuntary shudder shook the frame of Henry; he almost closed his eyes, as if he would have shut out every idea of that woman who had thus tainted every succeeding moment with misery; he sighed, he groaned in very agony.

Juan cast a calm, unpitying look towards the almost lifeless body of Edward, which, as it could only be accounted for by supposing him the injurer of his mistress, enabled Henry to receive from him a letter from Antonia, which he tore open with convulsive eagerness, as if to meet his own exculpation, and read—

" The terror which has seized my heart renders useless the injunctions I gave your friend, the promise I exacted from him, and my own wishes for secrecy. His note, which I enclose, will show you how I learnt that you had left him in anger, and doubtless inflamed with jealousy and suspicion. It will serve likewise to inform you of my weakness; but I can better endure the shame I now feel, than the terrible apprehension that your hand may be uplifted against the man whom you ought to revere as a friend and saviour, and whom it will be my fate ever to regret as one seen too

late to gain his love, too early to ever hope that happiness can become the lot of

"ANTONIA.

"I am in the more distress respecting your meeting, because I fear that my messenger will be tardy in delivering this, being foolishly offended with your friend for refusing my invitation. I beseech you, captain Deverell, by the pains you have felt for one unworthy your love, leave me not a moment in suspense!"

"Return," said Henry, in a voice of terror, "and tell your lady what you have beheld; she has made me the murderer of my friend."

The wild distraction of Henry's look made Juan shudder; he silently withdrew, while with clenched hands, Henry stood gazing on the cottage-door with such a frenzied stare, as if his soul were issuing at his eyes to meet eternal perdition.

How long he had thus stood he knew

not, for neither time nor reason held their places in his brain; but he was roused to action by his servant, who told him that the ball was safely extracted, that Mr. Sefton desired to see him, and added—"Come, sir; pray come; I'm sure it would break my lady's heart to see you in this way; things be bad enough in all conscience without this."

"Your lady! c—se your lady!"

"Oh Lord! your honour wouldn't curse your own mother, my lady Mowbray, the best woman that ever broke bread! Do come, your honour."

Muttering "Mowbray! mother!" Henry suffered Richard to lead him into the cottage, where the sight of Edward laid on a mattrass, with the surgeon sitting by him, and the two officers bidding him good-bye, recalled more distinctly, but less distractingly, the events which had bereft him of sense; he looked at him a moment, and then clapping his hands on his forehead, he again found refuge in tears, which fell as drops of dew upon the burning herbage.

"Thank God, all is well with me!" said Edward, "which is better than either of us deserve. You must, after all, my good fellow, trust me."

Henry answered by loud sobs, and holding up the letter of Antonia. The surgeon entreated him to be composed, and declared that the life of his friend depended solely on the composure of his mind; and observed—"Do you not see, captain Deverell, how much your outrageous sorrow afflicts him?"

Henry did perceive it, and he became apparently tranquil, and with even female attention and docility, attended to every medical direction. The previous fatigue and fasting Edward had suffered, proved favourable to him in his present state, as it preserved him from fever. His bravery, generosity, and evident affection for Henry, had so won the hearts of the officers who had witnessed it, that they were solicitous to the utmost to contribute to his comfort; and as there was little else to occupy the surgeon at present, he was happy

in experiencing every possible alleviation of his calamity; though could his mother and sisters have beheld the state in which he laid, it is probable that they would have considered it deplorable, since an English cottage conveys not the slightest idea of a Spanish one.

On the third day after Edward's confinement, Henry was called out on duty, and during eighteen hours was in a state of incessant fatigue and continual danger; but the moment he was at liberty, he flew to take his station by the bedside of Edward, whom he found in a state of such anxiety respecting him, as to have considerably inflamed his wound. When he found him safe, he consented to take the draught which would lull him to repose; and not till he had witnessed this repose, did Henry allow his jaded frame to sink to slumber.

It was doubtless a pleasant, nay, a blessed sight, to behold two young men who had so lately met for such a different purpose, sunk into the happy oblivion of their sorrows and their anger, their errors, and

their remorse, yet apparently sensible of their affection, since the hand of Edward closely held the arm of Henry even in sleep; yet when the latter awoke, he could not believe what old Ursula the nurse insisted upon, that the Virgin herself, in her anxiety to convert such amiable heretics, had appeared by the bedside and wept over them both, especially the sick man, whom she stooped to embrace, and even took from her celestial bosom something, which she strove to put into his hand.

"You dreamt all this, Ursula, did you?"

"I dream! no, signior; how should I dream who never slept? I saw her, as plain as I see you, standing over my patient, just as I awakened from a doze."

Edward awoke, and stretching out his arm, a little cross dropt from his hand. Henry instantly gathered it in silence, and sent the superstitious Ursula to prepare some chocolate.

On looking at the cross, which was not a shadow, and could not have been the gift of a dream, and considering Ursula's

account of the vision, there could be no doubt that Antonia had been their visitor. Edward regretted that her "celestial bosom" had admitted a guest that was doubtless destroying her peace, and he felt for her a pity almost too tender for his own; but such a proof of regard for another, dear as that other was, stung Henry to the quick. The dreadful remorse, the bitter grief, which had lately occupied his mind, appeared as if it had torn up, root and branch, that unhappy passion which had hurried him to the commission of a crime he felt that he could never forgive himself for perpetrating; but this circumstance coming at a time when his fears for his friend's life were removed, and his heart experienced a kind of melancholy leisure for suffering, again awakened regret, jealousy, passion, and despair; he felt a kind of terrible assurance that she must be finally irresistible to the man she thus continued to court, since he found her still deeply interesting to one whom she had first deluded, and then forsaken.

Edward read these thoughts, and conscious that it was next to impossible to withstand the tears of Antonia, much as she had already cost him, and much as a near view of the grave had tended to diminish all earthly charms in his sight, he therefore proposed that he should be that day removed in a litter to the abode of his friend, which was accordingly done; and on arriving there they found that several families had fled before an irruption of the French during the two last days, and taken refuge in a neighbouring town, amongst whom they doubted not was that of don Anathea del Puego.

In the course of ten days Edward recovered his health, and finding his strength increase, he became desirous of accompanying Henry in some of those skirmishing expeditions, which now took place daily, and were deemed the preludes to more general engagement.

Of this Henry would not hear; his severe anxiety, his bitter regret, even his constant attendance on Edward, had en-

deared him to him beyond all former affection; he looked upon him as so exalted, so virtuous a being, that he felt equal solicitude to save him from motives of admiration and esteem, as obligation and friendship; and considering himself as having sinned against all his family in seeking to deprive them of such a jewel, he felt as if the only reparation he could make was that of restoring it to them in safety. Such was the tender attention with which he watched every step in the convalescence of his friend, consulting his looks, and guarding his movements, that his brother officers sometimes joked him on the care he took of his wife, for such was the delicacy of Edward's person under his confinement, that opposed to the stature and sunburnt face of his friend, it appeared feminine by contrast.

"I do not seek, nor hope, to distinguish myself," said Edward; "that would be rather ridiculous vanity, than noble daring; but since I am on the spot, I should like

to draw my sword in my country's cause, I confess; besides, you know, Hal, such milk-sop-faced fellows as me must shew our courage, or the women will give us no credit for possessing any."

"For Heaven's sake say nothing about women! 'tis my misfortune to know, what I have often heard colonel Campbell assert, that paled-faced men were ever favourites with the ladies."

"Not with *all* ladies," said Edward, with a sigh; "there are who prefer heroes to all other beings, and unhappily think no man a hero that is not six feet high."

"By the way, that puts me in mind of what I heard the other day, that sir Donald Mackenzie is expected, with a new reinforcement hourly. I am sorry to find, though much admired, he is yet not liked. I heard some soldiers talking of him, who called him the great Ben Lomond, and wished him laid in the loch. 'Tis well for me he is coming, however, for he will help to console me for your loss."

This incident confirmed Edward in his

resolution; but being now intimate with several officers, he communicated his wishes to them, and said no more to Henry, who, on the morning of the expected battle, was called early to the field, and learnt there his friend's destination, which for a short time afflicted and discomposed him much. But Henry was now a veteran soldier; the call of duty ever found his heart at its post; and in the "din of war" every claim but those it imposed was forgotten; alike submissive to the command of others, and powerful in issuing his own, beloved to idolatry by his own men, and respected by all, he inspirited, directed, and sustained his troops, and in the thickest crowd, or fiercest onset of the battle, was ever alike intrepid and skilful.

The contest of this day was terrible; never had the military genius of France shone with higher lustre in the disposition and discipline of her legions, nor bade fairer at one time to ensure the victory, since to acknowledged talent she added all the advantage of numbers. But what can-

not British valour perform beneath the guiding intelligence of her invincible commander? By degrees the spirit of the French began to flag; terrible inroads were made in the body of the main army, the wings of which were universally routed. Henry saw the line of advantage which opened to him, and pursued it with unabated zeal and unwearied valour; but in the very summit of victory, his horse was shot under him, and a check given to his pursuit, in which he found a moment to think of, and silently to pray for, Edward.

Edward, meantime, had fully proved that the roaring of cannon, and the clash of arms, were as little consonant to his feelings as his habits—that command of mind was more in his power than command of nerve—and that although he possessed decided personal courage, probably in a much higher degree than many around him, he yet had not the power they possessed of conforming to the circumstances the lesser habitudes demanded; but he had the satisfaction of rising with the oc-

casion—his nerves became strung to the endurance of sights of horror, and his eye quick to elude danger, or discern advantage; and when the moment of success arrived, the proud enthusiasm of his soul caught all the fire and ardour that animates the votaries of glory. His was the classic courage, which, originally lighted at the page of history, now flamed at the command of patriotism; he rushed into the very heart of the battle; danger and death surrounded him on every side; and the officer by whose side he had fought, as he lost sight of him, gave a sigh to his fate, exclaiming, "Britain never lost a braver boy!" But he was not lost; animated by his example, or roused to energy by the proof that a mere volunteer could parry danger so well, numbers followed and surrounded him, and he soon became unconsciously guarded on all sides; but as the battalion gave way, these guardians pursued the advantage, and he soon became comparatively alone. Confusedly he looked around, and beheld the enemy fly in

every direction. In the moment of exultation, he rushed forward to join in pursuit, but had scarcely reached two soldiers before him, who were raising a wounded officer, when they were surrounded and made prisoners.

This accident was by no means in the catalogue of Edward's mischances; and his spirit rose so indignantly, that he would inevitably have lost his life on the spot, but for the entreaties of his countrymen. The words of the disabled officer arrested him, and his claims were on congenial feelings, habitual exertions; for him he resigned his sword; and stooping over him with the duteous compassion of a son, he sought to staunch his wounds, and apply the knowledge his own suffering had taught him for the benefit of his fellow-sufferer.

Henry was in the situation of Richard, ready to offer a "kingdom for a horse," when he was informed by a party passing him in pursuit, that his friend was taken prisoner. Henry was almost frantic, but recalled his self-command, which rarely de-

serted him even for a moment in the field. Seizing the bridle of the first man who came near him, he obtained his horse and his assistance, collecting every straggler he met with, as he crossed the field in the direction pointed to, where he saw a party of French hastening away with the wounded officer, whom his fears immediately named Edward. With fury that bore down all before it, though as yet unassisted by his followers, he charged the enemy, and Edward distractedly beheld him expose himself to what appeared positive destruction; but in a few minutes he was powerfully assisted by the few he had collected, and a complete rescue was not only effected, but several prisoners secured; and Edward had not only the satisfaction of finding himself liberated, but the wounded officer restored, in all probability, to life and to his country; but this joy was damped, by perceiving that it was purchased by the blood of Henry.

Night was now closing in upon the pur-

suer and the pursued, affording to both a happy respite from intolerable toil, and with some degree of surprise, Edward found himself free from all injury, and with great joy learnt that Henry's wound was slight; there was some reason to hope that he would have been the bearer of dispatches to England, but he had proved himself too valuable to be spared in his department, cavalry being very precious; but a worthy man, with whom they were both acquainted, was appointed for the purpose.

"I am not so selfish," said Henry, "as to wish you to remain here; you have now satisfied yourself and every body else that you can fight, and in accompanying the dispatches, you secure the most desirable and rapid conveyance possible. Go then, my dear Edward, and take with you my thanks, my gratitude—and to my mother and sir Francis my obedience."

Edward smiled at the word obedience, though his heart was very full.

Why do you smile? I certainly should

have obeyed sir Francis; in fact, *did* obey him. 'Tis true, I hesitated, because I believed—fool that I was! I believed that Antonia loved me, and I did not think it justifiable in me to condemn her to sorrow in order to spare myself; but I repeat it, I wished to be able to obey, and I was convinced that I should be wretched, even if I obtained her; what would you more?"

"Nothing, my good fellow. I believe the truth was, you were made to consider the matter justly, and that if even I had been out of the question, things would have taken the turn they did, and that is as much as can reasonably be expected from an independent son."

"Independent! ridiculous! sir Francis would do me more justice; he knows that I consider myself at his disposal."

"If he should command you to marry?"

"That I can *never* do. Antonia's *charms* have rendered those of every other woman nugatory—her conduct made her whole sex disgusting. I never will marry!"

Edward thought justly that the reasons

were foolish, but he believed the conclusion, because he felt that it would be his own.

"You will, I trust, be more happy," said Henry, after a long pause; "and, pardon me, Edward, you have sometimes lamented your father's improvidence."

"I have, and never more than *now*; *your* sorrows have alone prevented me from troubling you with mine."

"Then surely, Edward, your own heart tells you what mine would say. In this package to sir Francis is my will, which, if I fall—but we will say no more of that. Edward, you forgive me?"

"And understand you too. I will command your purse, Henry, whenever I need it."

"My dear fellow, Heaven bless you for this also!"

The moment of parting came, and if tears glistened on either cheek, they could not be termed those of weakness or effeminacy. They were silent, for the heart of each was too full for utterance; but

when the hour was past, Henry was, happily for himself, obliged to remove in haste to a different part of the country, and Edward had the advantage of an intelligent companion, and a different district to travel over from any he had seen, as they embarked for England from Oporto.

During their journey they witnessed those ravages which are not only the unhappy consequences of warfare in general, but mark its most ferocious features, and must ever reflect infamy on the perpetrators. Exposed to the rays of the sun, and all the hardships inseparable from travelling, Edward became completely tanned, and was complimented by his companion as looking *en militaire;* but he found, as he moralized over the beautiful and ruined districts through which they passed, succoured the widow and her babes, as they rode by her roofless shed, or darted his eager eyes towards the billows that should waft him to his native land and all its promised joys, that after all he was not born to be a soldier.

CHAP. VIII.

In the month of April, sir Francis and his family returned to town, for his health was far from good. The losses of youth are easily repaired; but those of more advanced life require care, and a physician was deemed necessary to the baronet, who was still in a state of anxiety respecting Henry, and whose lady was anxious respecting both.

Louisa's watchful tenderness over both her parents, and her awakened fears for her father, so occupied her mind, and in a great measure her time, that she had not found leisure for the indulgence of regrets, which, in destroying her, destroyed those she loved also; and though she was still pale, and rather thin, she yet might be said to be herself again. They had received only two letters from Edward, one of which announced his arrival, the other

was short, and though satisfactory in its contents, was so oddly written, and so singularly brief, as almost to lead to doubts of its authenticity, and the rather, as the packet which conveyed it brought no letters from Henry.

This letter was written by Edward at a time when he held the pen with the utmost difficulty, and when Henry, overwhelmed by self-reproach, apprehension, and ill-requited love, was still more incapable of writing than himself, and yet alike fearful that any news should transpire which might alarm their distant friends.

Edward arrived in London the beginning of June. He hastened, in the first place, to his aunt's, wishing her to precede him to his mother's presence, on whom he would not break abruptly. When he entered, there was a cry of joy and surprise, and with great emotion he perceived Louisa sitting with Emma and his aunt.

Tears were in the eyes of Louisa; she felt more grateful to him than she could express; yet she was not anxious to re-

press the words that rose to her lips; she loved her brother most tenderly; and she had been taught to consider him as her brother's preserver from an imprudent marriage; but her heart knew how to estimate that brother's sorrow. She asked after him with a voice of such faithful sympathy, that Edward almost feared she had learned the extent of that unfortunate affair, whose sad detail the friends had mutually agreed to hide from every other eye.

In a few minutes Mrs. Danvers ordered her carriage, and accompanied Edward to his father's house, saying that in an hour she would send for the young ladies, who were, in the meantime, to acquaint sir Francis and lady Mowbray with the arrival of Edward. Emma began to write a note the moment they were out of sight; but with all her gaiety, could scarcely repress the tears of joy, and perhaps of some other affection, which agitated her—"Dear me," cried she at last, "what a fright Edward is! he's as brown as a Mulatto, and has got

whiskers! I wonder what your brother is like, who has been there so much longer?"

"Like what he was, I dare say. You forget he had been two years in Spain when you saw him; for my part, I think Edward amazingly improved."

"I'm glad of it," said she, with a smile of saucy penetration; but it met no look of consciousness, no glow of confusion, in the face of Louisa; on the contrary, a tranquil complacency alone possessed her features; she was well pleased that Edward was returned, for she liked him, and she dearly loved her brother, whose friend he was, and there her feelings rested.

Such were not the feelings of the mother, who now received that Edward, her well known, her invaluable son; again and again she clasped him to her bosom—asked him a thousand questions, which interrupted every answer; sometimes she wept over him, but still she smiled upon him; and Edward in her fondness felt a pang he had never known so acutely before—"How had he dared to injure such a

mother—*to* risk a life *she* held so precious?"

It is unnecessary to say how more than welcome, how infinitely dear he was to both sir Francis and lady Mowbray, who received him with tears of grateful tenderness, and heard from him an account of Henry that rewarded all their solicitude. He was much struck with the alteration in them both, which of course was more observable to a stranger than their daily associates. On mentioning it to Emma, he added, "I wish Henry had come with me; I am persuaded he would do them all good; I see Louisa is inwardly pining about them."

"She *is*," returned Emma; "and I think it your duty to acquaint captain Deverell, that he may get leave of absence immediately, and come home, as he ought to do."

"Or as he ought *not* to do, perhaps; 'tis a very difficult matter to prescribe a soldier's duties."

"I'll never believe while I live, that it is

a fine young man's duty to stay and be shot, who had a good estate; in my opinion, he has other duties to perform quite as urgent, and much more agreeable."

"If you mean what is called marrying and settling, Emma, depend upon it Henry will never perform those duties."

"Never's a long day, brother. As sly as you are, I know you have been over on purpose to put a stop to some Spanish wedding, or other wicked nonsense; so what possible reason can there be why he should not come home, and live honestly in his own country?"

"Hearts once firmly, warmly attached, minds that have distinguished their kindred mind, and associated every idea of future happiness with it, cannot tear themselves from objects so beloved, even if——"

"Pooh, pooh, my dear Ned! this may be all very well with such kind of hearts and minds as your own, but Harry's, though quite as good, is of much more every-day materials, take my word for't. He may not, and I hope will not, find any second

dulcinea in Spain; but let him come to London, and be assured he will find young women that will heal all his wounds, precisely for the reason you give for their continuance, because they are really and truly kindred minds; whereas 'tis ten to one whether there was any mind concerned in his last affair."

"Well, child, *you* mustn't say that, however, for now I look at you, you are prodigiously like her."

"Am I indeed? Do tell me how she dressed her hair, dear Edward?"

"It was parted there, and long ringlets fell on the forehead, much like the pictures of Lely."

"And her gown, how was it made? do tell me. What a dear creature you are! I must own, much as I love you, I never did think you would have travelled to so good a purpose. Now, how was her gown made?"

"Ha! ha! ha! really even flattery will not get that out of me, for I can only tell you it was short, and had a different coloured

waist. I will, however, assure you of one thing, in which there is no flattery at all, you are in your person much the finer girl of the two."

"My dear Edward, you are a most amiable creature; but if this dulcinea is not so very, *very* handsome, how came he to——"

"Oh she is very, *very* charming; she has a good understanding, an eloquent tongue; she plays tolerably, sings like a syren, and dances much better than any woman ought to do."

"Oh, aye, dances all over, from her eyes to her fingers ends. Well, I shall never dothat to please any man, not even—— You may depend upon it, Louisa and me will sport the Lely head and the robe à l'Espagnol immediately, of course the whole world will follow us."

"I am happy to see you so intimate with Louisa—it was more than I expected, you are such a madcap, Emma."

"Have a care; don't offend your prime vizier. Louisa and me are admirably adapt-

ed for long and warm friendship, for we think alike on all serious subjects, and differ on all trifling ones, of course we find perpetual food for conversation in our discussions and argumentations, and are not driven to make confidential communications we might soon repent of, and so learn first to fear, and then to hate each other, as female friends do in general; on the contrary, we have congenial taste, sincere esteem, and so much affection, that though not necessary for each other's happiness, we are certainly so for each other's pleasure."

"A very rational and agreeable kind of friendship."

"Very much so; and yet one of which our husbands (when we get any) need not be jealous. Louisa has a finer understanding, and infinitely more information than I have, of course I always gain something from her conversation; but then I have two years more in age, and five years more knowledge of the world than she has, and a little dash of common sense, that is vastly

convenient to persons of very extraordinary refinement and subtle sensibility."

"But Louisa, with all her sensibility and filial affection, is a stranger, I fear, to——"

"Oh yes, she loves not at all at present, depend on't; but surely you, who are just come from the land of chivalry, can learn to write something very pretty on a *carte blanc*. I wonder you met with nothing there to quicken your perceptions; surely you can't expect a woman to speak first? Why, Edward, you absolutely blush; well you may, if you expect Louisa to make overtures."

"Do not speak of Louisa lightly, Emma; she is a being so superior, so highly gifted, so much above——"

"Very true, very true; there is something quite shocking in your presuming to think of her."

"Yet certainly a more gentle and condescending creature, more meek in manners, more humble in principle, more mild in dignity, never existed."

"So much the more shocking would it

be to take advantage of her goodness; I hope you will never think of it, brother."

"Don't laugh at me, Emma; I revere her—I adore her—I——"

"Do learn only to plain *love* her, and then perhaps you'll get her. Good-bye; you are better for your travels, I find; but still very far short of my ideas of what a sensible lover ought to be."

CHAP. IX.

VERY soon after Edward's arrival, both the families of Mowbray and Welbrooke went down to their respective seats; and soon after they were settled, lord Welbrooke arrived, and welcomed his son; he had never lived at home more than a week at a time since the development of the unhappy intrigue we have mentioned; and it appeared hitherto from his manners, that shame and repentance prevented his acceptance of the truly cordial forgiveness his lady and son equally held out to him. He had heard Edward's conduct so highly spoken of in that engagement which was now filling the kingdom with rejoicings, that he could not forbear making it a point to see him; for he had ever most solicitously kept appearances with his family; but exclusive of this, he was really proud and

fond of his son, although so frequently severe in his manners to him; he had a heart, but his vices had warped it; his temper was once as amiable as his manners were captivating; but the perpetual necessity of concealment, the bickerings of remorse, and even the faultlessness of his wife, had contributed to sour it. One sin is the father of many; he who admits a crime, paves the way for a legion.

A kind of softer, yet more sensible melancholy, was evident in Louisa's manners, on returning to her dear natal home, than had lately appeared in London; and sir Francis was encouraged, from this very circumstance, to believe that Edward would in time fill up the vacuum in her heart, partially supplied by the society of his sister, and the other varieties which she had within the last few weeks participated in London. He felt some surprise that lord Welbrooke did not appear more anxious to push the matter, especially as sir Bennet Lawson was the admitted lover of Adelaide, and one wedding in a family is

frequently the precursor of another; but he shortly judged, from the evident embarrassment and pensive air of his lordship, that it was by no means a convenient thing to settle two children at a time; and this accounted likewise for the returning dejection too visible in Edward's face, at a time when every thing appeared in his favour; for it was evident that he was always a welcome visitant to Louisa, and that the books he recommended, the scenes he pointed out, and the music he chose, was preferred by her, either from the perfect congeniality of their tastes, or the preference she gave to *his*; sir Francis trusted that both had part in it.

In fact, if courtship consists, as Sterne has asserted, in "a number of quiet attentions, not so pointed as to alarm, nor so vague as to be misunderstood," it might be said, that, with all his lover-like fears, and natural or acquired timidity, Edward was yet an accomplished lover: his quiet attentions beguiled the soft melancholy of

Louisa without alarming her; she took refuge from other men's attention, by accepting Edward's, whom she ever represented to her own mind as Henry's substitute; by this distinction she effectually saved herself from other lovers, and yet did not give any decided encouragement to one who read her feelings so well as Edward, and was aware of the kind of preference being only that of friendship, yet was it so sweet, he dared not risk its loss by asking more.

Interviews between the two families were now frequent; and the viscount, unable to bear his own feelings, and control his temper, set out to Weymouth. Adelaide was now frequently with Louisa; and having completely conquered her *penchant* for Donald, was enabled to speak of him with ease, and frequently reverted to little circumstances which proved that his vanity at least had misled his conduct with regard to her; and poor Louisa, in this error, saw one that would have been peculiarly fatal to her happiness as a wife. The sense of Donald's unworthiness was

extremely bitter to her; and her fond parents saw, with sincere grief, that she was still far from ease; and this grief increased, on observing that a still deeper gloom hung on the bosom of their young friend Edward, who did not visit them so often, and when with them, avoided even casting his eyes towards Louisa.

Things were thus situated, when Mrs. Danvers and Emma became the guests of lady Mowbray, the friends of the bride-groom-elect being visitants with lady Welbrooke.

One evening, after they had returned from a large dinner-party, in which this conduct of Edward's had been distressingly conspicuous, and where Louisa had evidently attracted the glowing admiration of two gentlemen, Emma, in her usual jesting manner, said—"Pray, Louisa, tell me honestly, whether, if you were forced to marry, to-morrow morning, you would take lord Chisleton, Mr. Shepley, or my brother, allowing their fortunes were alike?"

"How ridiculous! I would not marry any body to-morrow morning, for the whole world."

"What, not to save yourself from hanging? or, to put the case stronger, to save your parents?"

"In that case, I think you are pretty certain which; your brother is little obliged by the preference.'

"Indeed but he is; for though he is *my* brother, I am sure he is a strange, stupid creature; now, honestly speaking, didn't you think so?"

"Indeed I did *not;* he was low, and scarcely spoke to me; but low or high, he never can be otherwise than engaging or intelligent."

The baronet's eyes sparkled with joy; Mrs Danvers caught their expression; and wishing Emma a good-night, said, "she felt inclined to sit a few minutes with sir Francis and lady Mowbray."

The young ladies went out together; and when the door was closed, Mrs. Danvers thus spoke—"Sir Francis, I cannot

be mistaken any more in the expression of your countenance, just now, than the whole tenor of your conduct towards my unfortunate nephew, whom I am sure you love as he deserves to be loved."

Sir Francis and his lady declared that Mrs. Danvers only did them justice in feeling assured of their regard for him.

"Well then, I will speak out, come what will of it; I have no notion of good people being not only rendered wretched by bad, but liable to being classed with them; you see my nephew miserable, shunning those he loves, and trembling before you who are his best friends; this has a very odd look with it, of course, and is quite enough to make you think something very particular."

The baronet owned that he was puzzled, but by no means prejudiced by Edward's conduct.

"No more you ought, sir Francis; a better young man never existed; but his father is——I'll tell you what he is, though he will never forgive me, I know—his fa-

ther, sir Francis, is a villain—aye, a *villain!*"

Sir Francis started—his lady shuddered.

"I've no notion of mincing matters amongst honest people; lord Welbrooke's conduct has been all of a piece, to my mind, ever since he married my niece; though she would tell you, perhaps, it was made up of faults and repenting, of alternate kindness and cruelty; in fact, she would tell you nothing, because she has too much principle to tell lies for him, and too much love even yet to tell the truth; but the fact is, that he has been from time to time, for the last five-and-twenty years, (the period of his married life,) employed either in endeavouring to seduce innocent, silly girls, or being himself the prey of artful, abandoned women, who have so preyed upon him, as to injure his fortune terribly; for though by no means given to the vice of gaming, (or indeed any other,) he has repeatedly been led to play in private with wretches who have stripped him, and to whose impositions he has submitted,

rather than expose his own conduct; for with all this, he has still either such a regard for his family, or such a horror of infamy, as to do his utmost to preserve his character."

"Who would have thought it!" exclaimed lady Mowbray.

Sir Francis sat silent, overwhelmed with thought.

"It was his early errors of this kind, which induced my sister, lady Welbrooke's mother, to dispose of her fortune in the way she did, giving her daughter an absolute power of disposal, which has been a very happy thing, seeing it has in fact supported the family, and enabled him to throw away the produce of his own estates, without mortgaging them—a circumstance he was solicitous to avoid, because, by a clause in his wife's settlement, he is bound to consult her; and his dread of publicity has operated to prevent him asking his wife's counsel, for the means of providing for his mistress. That wife has therefore been at

once the friend to whom he could alone look in every emergency, and the slave on whom he could exhaust the ill-humour arising from disappointment and pecuniary embarrassment; with a splendid fortune, she has been tied down to bare necessaries—with the warmest feelings of a mother, she has been compelled to refuse every indulgence to her children, which their rank in life demanded—and with a spirit as noble, a heart as generous as ever glowed in any human breast, she has been so situated as to earn for herself the character of an avaricious hoarder, who, in amassing wealth for her heir, refused her daughters common pleasure and advantages, her husband the splendor to which he was entitled, and which, as the most elegant and amiable of men, he was well calculated to enjoy; and, in short, except by her servants and children, lady Welbrooke is considered a morose, fidgetty, stingy woman; oh, it makes me quite mad to think of it! Had you seen her when she married, lovely, gay! confiding! so fond of him! well,

thank God, *I* never was married. There was a time, 'tis true, when I loved a man, but then he was such a man! but the best go first; he was too good for this world."

Mrs. Danvers had been very angry, and spoke very loud, but her tongue now faltered, and tears rose to her eyes; she paused, and a dead silence ensued for some time. Lady Mowbray's whole mind was occupied with contrasting her own fate with that of poor lady Welbrooke's. She beheld her youth struggling with sorrow and poverty, which, under partial gleams of sunshine, had haunted her to the very confines of destruction; she had been rescued from the iron grasp by sir Francis; he came not, like this wicked lord, with an angel's face and a destroyer's heart; but, as if sorrow had purified—as if poverty had added sanctity to her virtue, he had approached her with profound respect, had humbled himself to raise and exalt her, had accepted from her cold and widowed heart the feeble offering of gratitude, and for twenty years, preserved to-

wards her the same unvarying tenderness, attentive protection, unbroken affection, and a fidelity that erred not, even by a look; whilst lady Welbrooke, equal to her lord in family, superior in fortune, blest with beauty, graced by education, and bestowing on him the best emotions of a virgin heart, had been thus forsaken, despised, insulted, bereaved of fortune, and traduced in character; her heart swelled high and higher, as the contrast rose to her view; she burst into sudden and passionate tears; she rose, she clasped the baronet in her arms, she pressed him to her heart, and wept aloud.

"Lady Mowbray! my dear Louisa!"

"Do not check me; I care not if the whole world beheld me; best—oh, dearest, best-beloved of human beings! oh, accept, accept the homage of my love—my unspeakable gratitude! I have long, long loved you, but never so much as now!"

The baronet could not reply; but the sweetest tears he had ever shed fell on the bosom of his wife; whilst Mrs. Danvers,

moved and restored by genuine sympathy, the bond of virtuous hearts to happiness, wept over, and embraced them both; whilst giving a sigh to that which she had lost, she found it impossible to be thankful that she was not married.

After such an interruption as this, it was impossible, for this night, to resume the melancholy topic they were previously discussing; they therefore retired, with the simple assurance from sir Francis to Mrs. Danvers, that her truly friendly communications should be held secret; and that the interests of her nephew should not be eventually injured by any temporary difficulties or pecuniary accounts; and a proposition to resume the subject, when the young people were out of the way, the following morning.

CHAP. X.

Although sir Francis only felt more drawn towards his intended son-in law than he had ever done before, from considering him the sufferer for his father's indiscretions, and his lady declared that he was now as dear to her as her own Henry, yet the former could not help seeing the necessity of a more thorough acquaintance with Edward than he had yet had. A father could not be too careful; some sins were deemed constitutional, and therefore hereditary; his own observation did not justify the assertion; some men of his acquaintance had however asserted it, and it was his duty to examine the matter. He was convinced that Edward's principles were good, for they were founded on religion; but had the youth strength requisite to act up to his own principles?

In awakening these doubts, Mrs. Dan-

vers had gone beyond her intention, and the deep thought in which they involved sir Francis, obliged her to renew the conversation, which she did by saying, "that as it was impossible for her niece to give a suitable portion with Adelaide, and offer a proper establishment for Edward, and his father had, on his leaving home, declared that he could do nothing for him, which was his method of confessing that he had been again losing his money, (which, from certain circumstances they had hoped would never have occurred again,) what was to be done? In consequence," added Mrs. Danvers, "Edward, ever fearful that your daughter would refuse him, and dreading that you should discover his father's real character, considering also that it would be an insult to you to address Miss Mowbray without being able to offer her a suitable establishment, finds himself compelled to withdraw, although there never was any period of his acquaintance in which his attachment was so fervent, or in which he flattered himself that he was so well re-

ceived." Sir Francis resumed only by a deep sigh. "Such," continued the lady, "are the lights cast on his evident distress by his mother, who may be truly said to participate in all his sufferings, and who appears to me to be literally declining so fast, that I cannot obey her injunctions as to secrecy, as you perceive; and I tell you honestly the truth, I should like to see her wishes for her son fulfilled before she dies; further, much as I love her, I wish not the continuance of her life."

"Lady Welbrooke then esteems my Louisa?"

"She does most truly; yet she has her fears that her son is not in any particu way favoured by Miss Mowbray, and this is another of the many sorrows which corrode her heart."

"Poor woman!"

"Aye, *poor* indeed! But, sir Francis, 'tis not my way to look and sigh over a case that admits of any relief. My fortune is large, and wholly at my own disposal. Emma is my child, it is true; but I have

never allowed her to consider herself my exclusive heir; nor does she wish it, for she is as generous a girl as ever was born. I mean to give each of her sisters something; I wish, too, to help Edward, but that help must be temporary. Now, if you will have the goodness to instruct me in the way it can be done, and confer with my lawyer, so as to benefit him, and yet prevent him from becoming the prey of his father, you will oblige *me*, make *him* happy, and perhaps save his mother—and surely, sir Francis, the blessings you thus bestow on others will visit your own head."

"My dear madam, I must leave the conveyance of your good intentions to some other friend; you must see clearly that I cannot enter into any scheme which has for its object the disposal of my daughter."

"Nay, sir Francis, do not misunderstand me—do not let us add to actual grievances the ills of misapprehension. My nephew loves your daughter—has long loved her; she is a jewel above all price; yet allow me to say he is worthy even of her, and

his present forbearance proves him so; but 'hope deferred maketh the heart sick,' you know, and I want to make his well. I am a plain woman, and though an old maid, have not 'forgot myself to stone,' and so I have spoke what my feelings, and my sincere regard for all parties, dictated."

"Mrs. Danvers, you are a worthy good woman; and I will be as honest, and, I trust, as liberal as yourself; Edward and Louisa shall not be divided by money, or rather the want of it—you and I will provide for them."

"My dear sir Francis, I don't wonder at your wife kissing you; you are a man after my own heart."

"But, my dear madam——"

"Nay, sir Francis, no buts, I beseech you; if we begin butting, the young people will never be married—Edward will never have a house of his own, and——"

"My dear madam, they are young enough to wait—in fact, the dreadful account you have given me of the father's depravity obliges me so insist on a further

probation from the son, much as I really do esteem him."

"So—h! a pretty business I have made of it!—a very pretty business indeed, when all the time I thought I was doing the poor boy good!—You never, never can believe that Edward will turn out like his father?"

"Indeed I do *not*, madam; but still—"

"*But* again! I'll tell you what, sir Francis, think what you please, I know what belongs to children, for wasn't I a mother to lady Welbrooke almost? and certainly I have been quite a mother to Emma."

"Undoubtedly, madam."

"Well, sir, then I know that the different way in which poor Edward was brought up from his father, has made, and ever must make, the most decided difference in their character and conduct. Lord Welbrooke was an only son; he was admired, flattered, and caressed, from his birth; his virtues, or rather his good dispositions, were extolled to the skies; but his faults were unpunish-

ed, and he was permitted every indulgence that did not personally injure him; he was naturally much of Edward's temper, mild and conciliating, and possessed the same kind of talents, a good taste, a ready speech, an ear for music, and so forth. Well, sir, having no brothers or sisters to contend with, and surrounded only by those who contributed to his pleasure, he concluded that pleasure was the business of life, and that *his* gratification was the duty of all his connexions. Having felt the pleasure praise confers, he became solicitous of gaining love, which is the sweetest praise, and he had a horror of censure from the same motive; he had no principles of religion engrafted on his mind beyond the expediency of appearances, and he annexed no idea to superior rank, except that of superior liberty; and the single motive of restraint engrafted on his mind was the being told that such and such things were, or were not, proper for a gentleman or a nobleman."

"I am afraid you have given but too

general a description of the education of young gentlemen of rank."

"Well, sir, he grew up with this kind of education better than many, for he had a very agreeable understanding and a more strong and healthy one than could have been expected; he made the grand tour, and came home well informed, and with as few airs as possible; but his residence in Italy had certainly done him no good, although he declared that he fell in love with my niece because she had the Italian features. *She* thought *him* charming in every respect; her mother was a widow, and knowing his father to be respectable, and hearing nothing bad of him, and seeing much that was engaging, gave her daughter to him, in the full persuasion that she had secured her happiness, in which hope I was united.

"Well, to make short of my story, he doted on her for the first month or two, then grew cold and negligent; but the poor thing never told us; she hoped that giving him a child would restore his affections; it did so, for a short time; but accident,

during her confinement, discovered to her his real cause of estrangement, which was an intrigue with a married woman of her acquaintance; the horror and the agonies she suffered, reduced her, in her weak state, to the brink of the grave, and in the real distress this brought upon him, he confessed his fault to my poor unhappy sister, and along with it pecuniary distresses, in which he was involved by a husband who was content to assess his own damages. The wife forgave him, and recovered; but the mother, though she also forgave him, and generously relieved him from all his embarrassments, had received a death-blow from his conduct; she drooped and died.

"He appeared to go on well till after Emma's birth, when—but I shall only tire you, and irritate myself. All that my niece could keep from me, she did; but it was my lot to find him guilty, at the time I speak of, of a cruel seduction. He is the slave of a passion which the habit of self-indulgence prevents him from considering as an enormity, and which yet his sense of what

is due to society, and his wish for praise as well as admiration, induces him to conceal by any expence or any sacrifice; and his continual embarrassments, as I have said before, have ruined his temper, while the wanderings of his passions have estranged him from every finer feeling and worthy affection; and he rarely looks on his children but as encroachers on his pleasures, and drainers of his purse; he is a stern father, an unfeeling, tyrannical husband; but it is his misfortune to retain, as you know, so fine a person, and so peculiar a charm of manner, as to preserve to him the power of deceiving not only his common acquaintance, but those unhappy beings who have the misfortune to please him; yet if ever he loved a woman really, 'tis his wife; and but for the errors of his education, for the determined selfishness began in childhood, and confirmed by habit, he would have been an affectionate husband, a tender father, and a blessing, as well as ornament, to society."

"I really believe you, and even now I

cannot give him up; I still hope for his reformation, especially from the seriousness which he lately manifested."

"Pshaw! pshaw! he is never sad but when he is poor; he will sin on to the end of the chapter. But look now at Edward; from two years old he has been an object of envy to this very father, merely because he would one day inherit a property no father could legally spend. Early taught to forego his own will, to submit even to caprice, and to feel a silent smile from his mother the only, though sweet reward of his conduct, he has been taught to look to his own heart for approbation, to his God for reward. Participating the woes of his mother, long before he understood them, he has obtained a finer sense of duty and love for her, and of more general compassion for the afflicted than any young man I ever met with, and has been taught more decisively to struggle with every error of temper in his own breast, lest they should add to the sufferings of his parent. From this parent, too, he has obtained the

habit of devotion, and that sincere humility, which, in looking up to God, gains the strength which frail humanity needs, and—"

A servant entering interrupted the good lady, by saying there were several soldiers at the gates, and one of them, a serjeant, had got a parcel from the captain, (which was Henry's exclusive title in his own family), which he had promised to deliver to his honour's own hands.

"Take all the men into the servants' hall, and tell the serjeant I will be with him presently—see they are well fed, William."

"Oh go, pray go, my good sir; I have heard enough of your son-in-law; to be sure, a letter from him is an event of no little importance."

The baronet retired, and soon received from the serjeant a letter, that was indeed of no little importance, if we might judge from its size, for Henry was by no means subject to the scribbling mania; and it was of the greater consequence, because, when the cover was removed, it was direct-

ed, and underneath was written, "For private perusal."

The serjeant was willing to fight all his battles o'er again, and at any other time the baronet would have listened gladly to the detail, but after liberally rewarding him, he consigned him and his companions to the servants, who, with gaping wonder, listened to stories which astounded them with horror, or filled them with pride, as they learnt the prowess of their young master; and in the course of the recital, they found, for the first time, that Mr. Sefton had figured away as a soldier.

"Are you sure of that?" said Watkins, doubtingly.

"Am I sure I'm alive?" said one of the men; "if I am, I owe it to he—besides, wasn't I his fellow-prisoner, as one may say? and didn't captain Deverell come in with a handful, as it were, and rescue us? I know Mr. Sefton to be as brave a man as any in his majesty's service; and if so be 'twas in my power, I'd walk ten miles to

look at him any day, though he ben't a regular."

"You needn't go so far, friend, for I see him coming along, and I maun take his horse, for he seldom do bring a sarvant here; for what's the use? who wouldn't be glad to wait o' him, I wonders?"

Elevated by the baronet's October, the party rushed out together, and surrounded Edward, whom they all personally knew, as he had naturally drawn much attention during his period of convalescence. At sight of him habits of subordination checked the tumultuous joy first evinced, but it still sparkled in their eyes, and animated at least the serjeant's tongue. Edward welcomed them with sincere joy, and his face was again lighted up with smiles; the honest fellows were to him fellow-travellers, and fellow-soldiers; his heart and his hand were alike open to them. Emma and Louisa had been rambling in the grounds, but finding the day grow too warm, were now returning. The former, seeing her bro-

ther thus surrounded, insisted on going to him; he was listening to the detail of an action, and did not perceive them. Emma, much amused, stood on the outside of the circle, and whispering silence to Louisa, who was not equally liable to break it, listened also.

"But you didn't tell his honour about the Spanish lady, and her uncle, and the old dooenno as was taken prisoners—he, sir, as captain Deverell was so intimate with."

Emma listened with all her might.

"Why, you know, they were retaken by — by sir Raw-head-and-bloody-bones; with his sword of sharpness, and shoes of swiftness, pounce comes he on the French like a hawk, and——"

"Fye, Simcox! you're always so full of your wit; you learn nothing o' that kind from your officers, I'm sure; 'tis mighty unbecoming in you."

Louisa smiled; but that smile became a sigh, as the serjeant continued—

"What Simcox means for to say, sir, be this: sir Donald Mackenzie rescued the

Spaniards, and lodged them all so snug as a button in Salamanca; but they do say, that the old don be so feared and pleagued with one thing or another, he be coming over to England to end his days."

The ladies were now espied, and the soldiers became instantly silent, and soon respectfully withdrew, cheering as they retreated; but the servants could not contain the wonderful news, and Watkins bowing, said, "I beg pardon, ladies, but I believe you didn't hear as how his honour here drove the French afore him like chaff afore the wind."

Edward burst into a horse-laugh, meant to drown Watkins's voice; but Watkins was determined to be heard, and his hearers, amongst much food for laughter, found much for admiration. Emma listened with much the most eagerness to the detail; but Louisa had likewise an interest; each told herself that she listened only for the name of her brother.

When they entered the house, they all were happy faces; but a few minutes of

sober conversation threw the wonted shade of pensiveness over Edward's brow, and informing Mrs. Dinyers that his mother was unwell, and wished to see her, he was about to depart, begging his compliments to sir Francis.

"Sir Francis has shut himself in the library, in that kind of way which is a signal to his family not to disturb him; but you are a privileged person, and I must inform him you are here."

The peculiar kindness of manner, the affectionate intonation with which lady Mowbray spoke, affected Edward; but he followed her out of the room, saying, "Oh no, my lady, don't disturb sir Francis, I beg;" but she had tapped at the library-door, and opened it, just as he reached it.

Sir Francis threw down the paper in his hand, and rising, with an alacrity unusual to him, threw his arms round Edward, then seized his hand, and wrung it with a fervour that appeared not less unaccountable than affectionate.

"What an immense letter from Henry!"

cried lady Mowbray; "why, my dear sir Francis, I did not know that you——"

"Nor were you intended to know; but ladies will go farther than they ought at times; hey, Edward?"

Edward's eye glanced on the letter; his cheek glowed; he hesitated, and endeavoured to say, "that ladies were surely entitled to consideration."

"True, and on that account I would have saved lady Mowbray from a recital that will, I know, cost her many tears, though it well became her ingenuous, noble-hearted son to make it. How we are any of us to thank you, Edward, I know not, unless you allow the healing of one wound to make amends for two. Let you and I, my dear fellow, take a turn in the plantation, whilst lady Mowbray indulges her very natural curiosity as to this secret correspondence."

"Surely, surely," exclaimed the alarmed mother, "my son has done nothing wrong?"

"My dear Louisa, I have said enough to

prepare you for an afflicting error in our dear Henry's conduct; but since you see all is now well, I beseech you control your feelings, and let the affair go no farther, unless, under proper restrictions, you speak of it to Louisa. As you read, so you will feel with me, and find from your own heart how mine is engaged."

"Ah," thought Edward, "this is indeed married life as it should be — 'where thought meets thought, ere from the lips it starts.'"

Whatever was the conference which took place between the baronet and Edward, certain it is, that the nature of it was pleasant, for the latter returned to the house to dinner, and his countenance wore the glow of hope, although he sometimes cast looks of solicitude so intense towards Louisa, as to bespeak clearly that he felt his fate was in her hands. Mrs. Danvers, however, saw only the bright part of his aspect, and she rejoiced in it, not only for his sake, but her own, being fully convinced that the powers of her rhetoric had

wrought this change in his favour. Emma was happy to see others so; nor was she the less so because the conversation very naturally turned much on Henry, about whom his mother alone was silent, almost to sadness; though now and then, as Edward spoke of him, her eye was lighted, and her cheek glowed with pleasure. Feeling less restraint than he had ever done before, Edward spoke much of his journey, described the country and its inhabitants, commented on their character, and the probable event of the war, and contrasted them with their invaders and defenders. In the course of these remarks, he gave many ludicrous anecdotes, with a spirit and gaiety, more delightful from the contrast it bore to his general manners, and at other times spoke of the sufferings he had witnessed, with pathos and tenderness all his own.

Never had he appeared so excellent a companion, so amiable a man, so valuable a friend, so agreeable a lover. When he at length departed, every one was loud in his praise except Louisa; but her father

did not consider that circumstance as inimical to his hopes; and being now fully satisfied that Edward would indeed deserve the treasure he meant to confide to him, he determined to lose no time in placing it beneath his care.

The baronet was the more anxious to conclude this affair, from the state of his own health, which remained very delicate, and which every new emotion tended to injure, so that even the happy events of the day made him sensible of a change in his constitution, which called upon him to provide for the future comforts and protection of those whom he loved, and whose welfare was the greatest object of his earthly cares.

END OF VOL. III.

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